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THE  
PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST,  
AS RELATED TO  
THE VERBAL INSPIRATION  
OF THE  
HOLY SCRIPTURES.

BY  
ELEAZAR LORD.

New-York :  
ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH, No. 683 BROADWAY.

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IN the ensuing pages the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures is argued: *first*, from the nature and limitation of the office of Christ as Prophet, and His exercise of that office, through the instrumentality of the sacred writers, by the inspiring agency of the Holy Spirit; and, *second*, from the fact of human consciousness, that men think and receive, and are conscious of thoughts only in words—so that thoughts conveyed to their minds by inspiration, must necessarily be conveyed in words in order to their receiving and being conscious of them.

*Piermont, April, 1859.*

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THE

## PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST.

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### I. THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST—HIS EXECUTION OF IT, PARTLY BY HIS OWN IMMEDIATE ACTS, AND PARTLY THROUGH THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF THE SACRED WRITERS, BY THE INSPIRING AGENCY OF THE SPIRIT.

IN a former volume I endeavored to state some principles which seemed to me important, both to a right understanding of the nature of Divine Inspiration, and to a defense of the doctrine of plenary verbal inspiration: as, namely, that by a law of our minds we think and are conscious of thought only in words—that we conceive thoughts, receive thoughts from others, are conscious of them, remember them, and express them only in words, which, when uttered, represent them to others as perfectly as we are conscious of them. This I suppose to be as true of all other intelligent agents as of man—a universal law of intellectual action. In our own case we infer it from our consciousness of thinking in words, receiving thoughts from the verbal articulations and writings of others, and

remembering and expressing them in the same words. Each individual being conscious of this for himself, justly infers that the same is true of all other individuals of his race. When intelligent agents of another race—as angels—speak to man, they convey their thoughts in words, and in return receive his thoughts in words; which implies that they think, are conscious of, and remember their thoughts in words. If their words express their thoughts, they must undoubtedly be conscious of the thoughts in the words which they utter, and they must remember their own thoughts in the words they had uttered, if they truly understand the thoughts in the words uttered in reply. For how could they receive the words of man in answer to a question put by them, if they did not remember the words in which they put the question, and were not conscious of their own thoughts in the words of the question, and conscious of the thoughts returned in the words of the answer?

So when the Divine Being speaks to man, His words convey His thoughts. Man receives and is conscious of His thoughts, by receiving and being conscious of His words. All that he knows of the thoughts is expressed in the words. The thoughts can not be conveyed to his understanding, or realized to his consciousness, apart from the words in which they are conceived and expressed. Without irreverence, therefore, this law of intellectual action may be regarded as of universal application. In the nature of the case the *mode* of thought, of intellectual action in consciously thinking, is verbal. A wordless thought is as inconceivable as a formless flower. Thinking and convey-

ing thoughts apart from words or signs equivalent to silent or vocal articulations, is no more possible than seeing without visual, or hearing without auditory organs.

Hence I infer that the Divine thoughts conveyed to the sacred penmen, were conveyed in the very words which they wrote as Holy Scripture. 1. Because thoughts can be conveyed from one mind to another, only in words or equivalent signs. 2. Because, man is so constituted that he can not receive, and be conscious of, the thoughts of another, except in the words which properly express them. 3. Because, the writer, being conscious of the words as he received them, could not write other than those words, without resisting his consciousness, and violating his integrity. 4. Because words so conveyed, received, and written, are the very words of Him who conveyed them; whereas, other words substituted in their place would not be His.

With this agrees the Scripture doctrine of Inspiration — *Theopneustos* — a Divine act conveying to the sacred penmen that which they uttered in writing, realizing to their consciousness the thoughts in the words, in-breathing them in a manner analogous to the impulsion of air into the lungs. All Scripture—namely, that which the sacred penmen were appointed to write, the words which they wrote which constitute the Scriptures—was given, imparted, conveyed to them by Inspiration, the in-breathing act of God.

Now all who believe the Scriptures to be of Divine authority, regard them as one of the very greatest gifts of God to man. Their relations and objects are such as to make it necessary to regard them as the word of God, the infallible expression of His thoughts, His mind



and will ; the only rule of faith and life. These claims on their behalf are founded on their inspiration. Their having been imparted to the writers by inspiration, the act of God, their Author. The thoughts and words existed in the Divine Mind before they were conveyed to the minds of the sacred penmen, and were consciously received and realized in their minds as the words of God before they wrote them. As written, therefore, they are the words of God.

The Divine procedure in the bestowment of this gift is in harmony with its infinite importance relatively to the glory of God, and the exigencies and destinies of men. It was provided for as an essential part of the system of moral government, and of redemption, to be manifested in the progress of events, by Him, who, as the Logos in the beginning, created all things. To Him, under the same delegated character, in His prophetic office, is to be ascribed the communication to the world of the words of God : partly by His own direct personal utterances to patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, and partly by the inspiring agency of the Spirit, through the instrumentality of the sacred penmen. It is throughout a delegated ministerial work, performed by messengers officially appointed to convey and publish the messages verbatim, which were committed to them as legates, and to which they were expressly restricted. If the Scriptures throughout were inspired, then every sentence and every word of the original texts proceeded from God, the Father of lights, through the Son as His messenger, the Spirit sent by Him, and the sacred penmen as His instruments.

I shall, therefore, endeavor to show that the pro-

phetic office of Christ, the Revealer of God—the Logos in the beginning, and the incarnate Word—expressly restricted Him to the utterance of the words prescribed by the Father whose Legate or Messenger He was; that He executed His office partly by His own immediate acts, and partly by the agency of the Spirit officially sent, under the same express restrictions, to inspire the prescribed words into the minds of men appointed to receive and utter them verbatim in writing.

## II. THE NATURE AND THE LIMITATIONS OF THE PROPHETIC OFFICE.

I can not better introduce this doctrine than in the words of the Assembly's Catechism, in answer to the question: "How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet? Christ executeth the office of a prophet in His revealing to the Church in all ages, by His Spirit and Word, in divers ways of administration, the whole will of God, in all things concerning their edification and salvation." This plainly signifies that He executed that office from the first institution of the Church, that He executed it by verbal revelations and instructions, and by the agency of the Holy Spirit; and that the communications so made comprised all that is written in the Holy Scriptures: all which, the Scriptures very clearly teach.

In that remarkable summary of "statutes and judgments," which Moses, at the command of Jehovah, spake to the Children of Israel, and recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, there is a concise description of the prophetic office of Christ. Moses was about to be

removed by death; and in view of the future exigencies of his people, he writes: "The Lord said unto me, . . . . I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put *my words in his mouth*; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto *my words* which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet which shall presume to speak *a word in my name*, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die." (Deut. 18.). The particulars in which the Great Prophet was to be like Moses, were, that he should appear in the form of man, raised up from among the Jewish people, and that he should speak only the words put into his mouth by Jehovah. This is evident from the context: for the promise was occasioned by the request of the assembled people at Horeb, that they might not hear again the voice of the Lord their God, nor see again the terrors of Sinai. "They said unto Moses, speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die."

The foregoing announcement is expressly applied to Christ, the Logos Incarnate, by the Apostle Peter, (Acts 3 : 22,) "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." And, again, the martyr Stephen (Acts 7) quotes the same prediction as designating "the Just One" of



whom his accusers had been the betrayers and the murderers. That specialty of the office which provided that *The Prophet* should speak only *the words put in his mouth* by Him whose Messenger he was, is expressly recognized, and its fulfillment attested by Christ himself. Thus, "He whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world" declares of Himself: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me. . . . My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me. . . . He whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him. . . . I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. . . . I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak." Again, addressing the Father, when about to close His direct personal teachings, He said: "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest me."

It is plain, therefore, that Christ, the Incarnate Word, in the execution of His prophetic office, was at liberty to speak, and actually spoke, those words only which the Father put into His mouth. He was officially in the strictest sense, the Legate, Representative, Messenger of the Father. But He was no less strictly so under the preceding dispensations, than while He personally sojourned on earth in the human nature. As the Logos in the beginning, all things were created by Him, and for Him. From the beginning He was the Legate of the Father, commissioned to execute His will in the works of Creation, Providence, and Grace; and sustained the offices of Prophet, Priest, and

King—the Revealer of God, the Teacher and final Judge of men. No man hath seen God the Father at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him. His appointment to the subordinate offices, relations and agencies which he was to sustain and execute, included the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, as well as the works of Creation and Providence; and it is not more certain that He performed those works, and filled the offices of Priest and King during the primeval and Levitical dispensations, than that He executed, what was from the very beginning most necessary—His office as Prophet, Revealer, Teacher and Law-giver of men. Accordingly He says: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me”—designated me to this office—“to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath *sent* me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn,” etc., etc. Answerable to this was his message to John the Baptist, in proof that He was the Prophet that should come: “Go your way and tell John what things ye have seen and heard, how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, *to the poor the Gospel is preached, and blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.*”

To the same effect are the prophetic references elsewhere to His peculiar office as prophet; as in Isa. 59:20, 21, “And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith

Jehovah. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith Jehovah; my Spirit that is upon thee—the Redeemer—and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith Jehovah, from henceforth and forever."

Again, in the 40th Psalm, (quoted and applied Heb. 10,) where the non-requirement and insignificance of the typical sacrifices apart from His obedience in His prophetic and sacerdotal offices having been brought into view, it is written: "Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the Book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation; lo, I have not refrained my lips. O Lord, Thou knowest, I have not hid Thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared Thy faithfulness and Thy salvation; I have not concealed Thy loving kindness and Thy truth from the great congregation."

Under the title of the Messenger (angel) Jehovah, the Messenger of the Covenant, as it is expressed in Malachi 3, He is mentioned many times in the Pentateuch and subsequent parts of the Old Testament; generally as appearing to individuals on extraordinary occasions, in the visible likeness of, and as performing acts proper to man—as speaking audibly, receiving answers, giving directions; as coming, standing, walking, stretching forth his hand; as seeing and being seen; as receiving worship; as going before the camp of Israel in a pillar of cloud, through the Red Sea and the wilderness; as speaking with Moses and with

prophets. When His Divine nature only is referred to, He is generally called Jehovah. When His official character and acts, His personal presence and visibility are specially indicated, He is called the Messenger, or a man, or is designated by some official title. The *man* with whom Jacob wrestled, is in Hosea 12 described as the Messenger,—even the Lord God of Hosts, whose memorial is Jehovah. “Moses was in the church in the wilderness with *the Messenger* (Jehovah) who spake to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers.” (Acts 7 : 38.)

Thus the Logos from the beginning, under the names which designated His Divine nature, and under the titles which signified His subordinate official character, and often His visible presence and official acts, as the angel, that is, the Messenger Jehovah, the anointed, that is, the Messiah, etc., executed the office of Revealer, Teacher, Prophet, under the express condition and limitation, proper to one sent to deliver verbatim the messages of an official superior,—namely, that He should utter no other than the words given, dictated, put into his mouth. Those words perfectly expressed what the Father willed to have uttered in His name, on His authority, as the infallible rule of faith and life.

But the Divine Prophet, both under the former and the present dispensations, executed this office in part directly in His own person, and partly through the instrumentality of messengers, prophets, and apostles, appointed by Him, and directly subordinate to Him. Under the primeval dispensation He spoke and conveyed His teachings directly to Adam, Noah, Job,

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob; and under the Levitical, to Moses, to the assembled people at Mount Sinai, to the people at Bochim, to Gideon, to Jephtha, to Manoah, to the children of Benjamin, and to others on various occasions. And under those dispensations, especially after the death of Moses, He exercised His prophetic office mediately, through the instrumentality of men whom He designated and commissioned to speak His words in His name, as He spoke the words of the Father; which words He conveyed to them not by His own audible utterances, as to Moses and the Patriarchs, but by the Holy Spirit, inspiring them into their minds, (realizing them to their intelligent consciousness, whether in dreams or otherwise.) Thus the word of the Lord came to them, the Spirit spake in them, by them, "by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began."

But in the nature of the case, He, in the exercise of His prophetic office, could not commission them as His delegates, to do more than was prescribed and authorized in His commission. If He was sent not to do His own will, not to speak of Himself, but to speak only the words given Him, put in His mouth by the Father, then the prophets, teachers, apostles, messengers, whom He commissioned and sent, could do nothing of their own will, could utter no words other than those which He by the inspiration of the Spirit, put into their mouths. Had they presumed to utter a word in His name which He had not commanded them to utter, death was the penalty. That penalty was signally executed in different instances, even upon some who were not publicly regarded as mere pretenders to the



sacred office. Thus, "the man of God," who was sent with a special message from Jehovah to Jeroboam, 1 Kings 13, and in confirmation of whose message a miracle was wrought, disobeyed in one particular the command which he had received. He had received the most express verbal instructions; but after faithfully executing them in part, he was induced by a pretended prophet who "lied unto him," to deviate and swerve from the immediate verbal directions of Jehovah. And, while in the act of disobedience, a message from Jehovah was sent to him: "The word of the Lord came unto the (pretended) old prophet, and he cried unto the man of God . . . saying, Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee . . . thy carcass shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers." Accordingly a lion slew him, and he was laid in the grave of the (pretended) prophet who had seduced him.

For another instance, take that of Hananiah, a false prophet who had predominant influence with Zedekiah and his princes and people, and who prophesied directly in opposition to the messages delivered by Jeremiah from Jehovah. "Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; the Lord hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold I will cast thee from off the face of the earth. . . So Hananiah the prophet died." Of the false prophets as a class, in contradistinction to the true, it is said: "They speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. . . . I have not sent

these prophets, yet they ran ; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied."

It were to contradict all that is recorded in Scripture on this subject, to say that the phrases "His words," "my words," "the word of the Lord," and the like, in the foregoing passages and elsewhere, signify doctrines, ideas, thoughts, apart from words. For the conveyance of thoughts apart from words is inconceivable ; and the reception of thoughts otherwise than in words, is contrary to the consciousness of all men. Besides, if thoughts only were conveyed to the minds of the sacred writers, why did not the text simply express that, instead of asserting that the words *came*, were *given*, were *put into their mouths*?

Such being the nature and limitation of their office, those who exercised it both before and after the advent, inclusive of the penmen of both Testaments, were alike bound by its exclusive rule in regard to the source of what they might utter ; and while, in general, they distinctly recognize that rule, and profess to deliver only what they received in accordance with it, if there are historical or poetical books, which have not, in their contents, such explicit recognition, they are so connected by quotations with other books that have, and by their original revelations and predictions, with the entire collection, that their being found in the canon in the days of Ezra, and at the advent, is proof sufficient that each and every penman of them, exercised that delegated office, which, under the highest sanction, restricted him to the utterance of those words only, which he received immediately from God. Moreover, it may be safely said that there are in every particular

book, passages, the very words of which must have been supernaturally conveyed to the writer. The book of Genesis, written by Moses, consists wholly of such passages, of which he could have had neither any personal nor any historical knowledge, or at best nothing more than floating popular traditions preserved by the children of Israel in the utmost degeneracy of their Egyptian bondage.

It was a distinct and well-defined class of men that exercised the prophetic office, by special Divine appointment, under the ancient dispensation. They are styled prophets and messengers of Jehovah, who in His name uttered His words ; men of God, as being officially sent by Him ; men to whom the word of the Lord came, that is, the words uttered or inspired by Him ; and collectively, His holy prophets, as in the discourse of Peter, " God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began ; " and in his second epistle : " Prophecy came not of old time by the will of man ; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

With this class, as with the apostolic messengers, the office was for life in each instance, and ceased only, when, in the one case, the Canon of the Old Testament, and in the other, that of the New, was completed. And it is to the men of this class that the penmanship of the Scriptures of the Old Testament is ascribed ; for they are collectively referred to and quoted from, as *the Scriptures, the writings, of the Prophets*, and Zechariah, one of the latest of the class, characterizes what had been previously written, as " the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in His Spirit by the former pro-



phets." These and the like descriptions and definitions of those sacred writings, decide them all to be alike the word of God. To quote from any part of any one of the books, is to quote the word of God. There is neither any exception indicated in any one of the books themselves, nor any room left for exception in the terms by which, collectively, they are characterized. If exceptions are assumed by human ignorance and presumption, they are assumed in opposition to the only infallible evidence and ground of certainty in the case, the testimony of the Scriptures themselves. It might with reason be assumed that a book professing to be given by inspiration of God, for the high and far-reaching purposes which He had in view, involving His own glory and the eternal destiny of His creatures, and confessedly containing revelations, predictions, laws, promises, from Him, must, in respect to all its contents, be His word;—His, where it records His own eternal counsels and His acts of creation, providence, and grace, and His, where the facts of human history, and the very words spoken by men, angels, and devils, are, with infallible verity, reproduced and written. As the case stands, to make an exception, were there room for one, would require the same supernatural inspiration by which the whole was given. The case is clear, that so far as the sacred penmen wrote in their official capacity, they wrote the very words given them by inspiration of God. If they wrote any thing otherwise than in that capacity, any thing merely as men, any thing at their own discretion, any words of their own selection, such words are not the words of God, and as honest men, they should have told us which they were.

Thus far, it is, I apprehend, indubitably certain; namely, that the prophetic office of Christ the Revealer of God, and infallible Teacher of men, restricted Him to the utterance of those words only which the Father gave Him—put in His mouth; that He exercised that office under the ancient dispensations, from the beginning; that He exercised it in part by His own immediate vocal utterances, and in part by the mediate instrumentality of a succession of men appointed by Him as His messengers, to utter vocally and in writing, only the words which He immediately gave them, by the official agency of the Holy Spirit, inspiring them verbally into their minds, as they uttered them. Some further evidence, as to their understanding and execution of this delegated ministerial office as His messengers, may seem to be necessary.

In this collateral aspect of the subject, it is obvious to begin with Moses, and then to glance at the testimony of his successors. And it is proper first to notice that Moses received his call and appointment immediately from Him, who in His own delegated character, appeared to him, as often afterwards, enveloped in a cloudlike flame, under a title of office, signifying *messenger*, as in Malachi 3 : 1, though here translated *angel*, as it is in some scores of instances where it designates the same official person, and as an official title is employed interchangeably with the Divine names which are appropriate to the respective persons of the Godhead as declaratory, not of their offices, but simply of their Deity. The Messenger Jehovah, the Messenger of the Covenant, (Mal. 3,) Jehovah the Son, in His delegated character, as the Messenger of the Father,

sent to declare and execute His will, immediately by His own personal agency, and mediately through prophets, apostles, messengers delegated and sent by Him—*appeared* to Moses in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush. . . . And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight. . . . And when Jehovah saw that he turned aside to see, Elohim called unto him out of the midst of the bush. . . . And he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, etc. . . . And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon *the* Elohim. . . . And Jehovah said, I have seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt. . . . And *I am come down* to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, etc. Come now, therefore, and *I will send thee* unto Pharaoh, that thou mayst bring forth my people out of Egypt.

It is plain that the title and the names above given, designate the same Divine Person in His delegated character, and that it was in the immediate exercise of His personal agency in that character that He appointed and sent Moses to speak and act in His name; and that He personally instructed and directed him in all the details of his subordinate ministry. In the progress of the instructions and announcements from the Messenger Jehovah at this first appearance, Moses interposed a variety of objections to his undertaking the proffered mission; and among others that of his not being a fluent speaker. "And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord?" Have not I, the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of all creatures, given man the faculty of

speech? "Now therefore, go, and I will be with thy mouth, *and teach thee what thou shalt say.*" Moses still demurring, Jehovah condescended to appoint Aaron to sustain precisely the same office in relation to Moses, that He appointed Moses to sustain towards Himself. The same words which He should speak to Moses, Moses was to speak to Aaron, and Aaron to Pharaoh and the people. "Thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be *thy spokesman* unto the people: and he shall be, even *he shall be to thee instead of a mouth,* and thou shalt be to him, *instead of God.*" A more precise description, or emphatic limitation, of the office, by which the incumbent was to utter no other than the words put into his mouth by the Superior who appointed him, can be conceived or expressed in human language.

I need not say, or confirm by any extended references, that Moses exercised his ministry to the day of his death, in conformity to this description and limitation. In general, what he uttered is prefaced by "the Lord said unto Moses," or other equivalent formulas. When he wrote, the Holy Spirit, as immediate Author and Inspirer of the Scriptures to be the instrument of His own official agency in the illumination, renovation, and sanctification of men, conveyed to his mind, realized to his consciousness, precisely what he should write.

There is an inherent incongruity and absurdity in supposing that the immediate Messenger of the Father, and the inferior messengers appointed by Him, should

be limited to the *vocal* utterance of the very words given to them respectively, and that the inferior messengers, when called to *write*, should be exempt from such limitation, and left to exercise any, the smallest discretion, in the choice of thoughts or words, to be published for the instruction, and as the infallible rule of faith and life, of all nations, during all times, and the rule of final judgment and eternal retribution! With what jealous care this specialty of the prophetic office was guarded, and with what severity infringements of it were avenged, is manifest not only in the destruction of individuals, and of whole companies of the professed prophets of Baal, from time to time, but in the signal retribution miraculously visited upon the aspirants and usurpers of the office of Moses during his personal ministry. Thus when "Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses, . . . and said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us? The Lord heard it and spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out, ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. And He said, Hear now my words: if there be a prophet among you,"—that is, a prophet in the ordinary sense of that word—"I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream."—As He often did to the prophets of subsequent times,—“My servant Moses is not so”—not a mere prophet, but represents me as Head of the civil and ritual, as well as the prophetic



administration,—“who is faithful in *all my house*. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and He departed. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and behold Miriam became leprous as white as snow,” etc. (Numbers 12.) And when Korah and his confederates rebelled, “and gathered themselves together against Moses, and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?” . . . “Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath *sent me* to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. If these men die the common death of all men . . . then the Lord hath not *sent me*; but if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth and swallow them up, . . . then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord. And it came to pass as he made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them . . . and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all that appertained to them.” The next day, the whole “congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord;” when by a supernatural influence fourteen thousand and seven hundred of them were instantly destroyed. (Numb. 16.)

Thus the law of the prophetic office, as limiting the

prophet to the utterance only of the words put into his mouth, as the messenger of Jehovah, was established, and vindicated, and rendered obligatory, and imperative, on pain of death, on all who were appointed to that office; and as such it was understood and acknowledged by the successive prophets after Moses. By this law, they were, from its nature, origin, and object, as necessarily subject to the verbal inspiration of the Spirit in what they uttered in *writing*, as they were to the audible utterances of Jehovah in what they *vocally* delivered in His name. He therefore spoke directly to them, commanded them to repeat His words, put His words into their mouth, taught them, prescribed to them what they should say. His word, His articulate utterance, whether of prediction, or narrative, precept, or promise, encouragement or threatening, came to them, not at their will and pleasure, but as passive recipients.

Accordingly, the Lord, by His own articulate vocal utterance, called Samuel to the prophetic office; "appeared to him, and revealed Himself to him by the word of the Lord;" spoke to him directly on various occasions, and specifically directed him what to say, what words to speak; and he spoke in the name of the Lord the words which he received from Him. When, by immediate Divine direction, he anointed David to be king, "the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." David, at the close of his career as head of the civil administration, and as a prophet, psalmist, and sacred writer, said: 'The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me.'

The word of the Lord came on successive occasions to Elijah, and he as often delivered the verbal messages which he had received. At length, by express command of Jehovah he anointed Elisha to be prophet in his stead, who also received and uttered special messages from Jehovah. Micaiah, a true prophet, being importuned to concur with the false prophets of Ahab, said, though threatened with imprisonment and suffering, "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak." Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets, each, from paragraph to paragraph, describes what he wrote, as immediately from Jehovah. Daniel, in part, received verbal communications through the intermediate agency of the angel Gabriel. By what minute provisions, and special acts and arrangements, the prophets were selected, raised up, qualified, appointed and sent, though not particularly specified in every instance, may be seen by reference to the case of one or two of them. Thus Jeremiah, chap. 1: "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee, I knew thee, and before thou wast born, I sanctified, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord God, behold I can not speak, for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not I am a child: for thou shalt go to all *that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I shall command thee, thou shalt speak.* Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Then the Lord put forth His hand, and *touched my mouth*; and the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." Jeremiah, accordingly, from time to time, spoke the very words which Jeho-



vah spoke immediately to him. When he wrote, he employed Baruch as his *scribe*, as Aaron was employed as the *spokesman* of Moses. "And Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord, which He had spoken unto him." (Jer. 36.) Those words which he so wrote on one particular occasion, comprised the verbal utterances of Jehovah to him during the preceding score of years, the recalling of which therefore, so as to dictate them with infallible accuracy, we may justly, and with confidence, ascribe to the inspiration of them into his mind, by the Holy Spirit, as he uttered them to Baruch. Again, with respect to the great contemporary of Jeremiah, who was called to the prophetic office from among the captives in Chaldea. "The word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel . . . by the river Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was there upon him." To fit him for the service to which he was called, he first had a vision of the Messenger Jehovah as seated on a throne. "Upon the likeness of the throne, was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.

. . . This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of One that spake. And He said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the Spirit entered into me when He spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard Him that spake unto me. And He said unto me, Son of man, *I send thee* unto the children of Israel. . . . And *thou shalt speak my words unto them*, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear." Next, to show him unmistakably, the nature

and limit of his prophetic office, the voice from the throne said: "Hear what I say unto thee, . . . eat that I give thee. And when I looked, behold an hand was sent unto me; and lo, a roll of a book was therein, and He spread it before me; and it was written within and without. . . . Moreover, He said unto me, Son of man, eat this roll, and go, speak unto the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. . . . And He said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and *speak with my words unto them*, . . . all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears. . . . I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel, therefore hear the word at my mouth. . . . When I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God." (Ezek. 1-3.)

Isaiah was called, instructed, and sent, in a similar manner. He saw the Lord, the Messenger Jehovah, in the form of man, sitting upon a throne, and, overwhelmed with a sense of his own corruption, and unworthiness he said: "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts. . . . Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And He said, Go," etc. (Isa. 6.) It was Christ whose glory he saw, and who spoke to him, and commissioned him as His messenger. (See John 12.) Daniel, also, saw the same Divine person, in the likeness of the Son of Man. (Danl. 7.) And Amos, when about to utter some special and most important prediction, says: "I saw the Lord standing upon the altar: and He said, Smite the lintel of the door that the posts may shake." (Amos 9.)

### III. OF THE OFFICE OF THE SPIRIT, IN RELATION TO THE SCRIPTURES.

A consideration of the Office of the Holy Spirit in the economy of redemption, will lead us to the same results in respect to the nature and limitation of the prophetic office of Christ, and of the subordinate office of His messengers, the prophets of the Old, and the apostles of the New Testament. It is according to the teachings of Scripture, and according to the faith of the Church of God in all ages, that the three Persons of the Godhead subsisted eternally as persons, co-equal in nature, and independently of all external works, manifestations, and relations towards creatures. And it is no less evident from the teachings of Scripture, its revelations, and its record of facts and events, in the progress of the Divine dispensations, and of the redemption, sanctification, and perpetuation of the Church, that those Persons entered into a covenant, prior to, and concerning the works of creation, providence, and grace, that is, all external works, as being foreördained before the foundation of the world, and centering in the chiefest of them, the work of redemption: and that on the basis of such covenant, and in reference to the execution of it, in and throughout all the ages of time, they assumed official relations towards each other, and towards the creatures that were to be brought into existence; so that, while they remain three Persons in one essence and one will, their acts towards the dependent universe are personal and official acts, arising from their official relations. Hence the

Scripture names and designations which refer exclusively to the Divine nature are common to them all, while each of them, in His official character and relations, is referred to by distinctive titles and appellations, not appropriated to the others. Thus the Father officially represents the will of the Godhead which is executed by the Son and the Spirit in respect to all the works in question. The Son is officially subordinate to the Father, the immediate Messenger of the covenant, the primary agent in the execution of the Father's will, and the accomplishment of those works. And the Spirit is officially subordinate to the Father and the Son, and is sent by them and either of them, as the Son is sent by the Father.

The office of the Spirit is therefore specific and limited, as that of a Messenger of the Father and the Son. It can not transcend that will of the Father which the Son was commissioned to reveal and execute, nor be otherwise than subordinate to the official prerogative of the Son. In a word, then, if the Son, as the Messenger of the Father, could do no act not prescribed by Him, and could utter no word not given or dictated by Him, and if He could not commission and send as His official messengers—the prophets and apostles—to do more than His own commission authorized, it follows clearly that the Spirit in executing His official agency, is limited by the same conditions as the Son.

In relation to the words of Scripture, therefore, He could utter, inspire into, speak by the mouth of, the prophetic and apostolic messengers of the Son, only the very words of the Father and the Son, as they were given to Him. He could no more assist or guide the

sacred writers to utter other words, whether relating to what they knew before or not, than the Son, as Messenger of the Father, sent to speak only His words, could commission His subordinate ministerial instruments to speak or write other than the words which He put into their mouths. And if the sacred penmen actually wrote any other than the words put into their mouths immediately by the Son, or mediately, from the Father or the Son, by the Spirit speaking in and by them, such words were not the words of God, but merely the words of men. No conceivable assistance or guidance could transform them into the words of God, or bring them within the rule of official prescription and authorization. The servant is not greater than his master.

The official works of the Holy Spirit, in this great economy, may be classed under several distinct heads.

1. That of inspiring into the minds of the subordinate messengers, prophets, apostles, and evangelists the words of the Father and of the Son to be uttered, vocally and in writing by them. This official operation of the Holy Spirit is largely attested with reference to the Scriptures collectively. It is variously described as teaching the sacred writers, giving them what they were to utter, speaking in them and by them, revealing the truths of the Gospel to them.

2. That of quickening, regenerating, illuminating, sanctifying the souls of men. In this He employs as His instrument the word of God, and that only—the words of Scripture, of all and every part of Scripture—

the words which He Himself had spoken by the mouths of prophets and apostles. These are the preëxistent seeds and germs which He plants in the heart and quickens into faith and life—the words by which faith cometh, the words of life, the sword of the Spirit, the word of God.

3. That of operating miraculously on physical and intellectual natures. Thus the Spirit of God came upon Saul and also upon his messengers, producing effects, apparently on their bodies and their minds. (1 Saml. 10.) Ezekiel says: "The Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness," etc. The Spirit caught away Philip, after he had baptized the eunuch, and he was found at Azotus. (Acts 8.)

The miraculous gifts conferred on the apostles and on others on the day of Pentecost, and afterwards, for special purposes, and during a limited period, are to be classed under this head. The gifts of tongues, of interpreting tongues, of discerning spirits, and others, were peculiar to that period, and had no connection whatever with the origin, bestowment, or writing, of any part of the Scriptures.

The words of Christ are the words of the Father by Him as sent of the Father. The words of the Spirit which constitute the Scriptures, are the words of the Father and the Son, by Him, as sent by them. As communicated by God the Spirit, and written, they are the words of God in the same sense as the verbal discourses of God the Son were His words. It was the office of the Spirit as sent by the Father and the Son, to utter the words of Scripture in writing, through the



instrumentality of the sacred penmen; as it was the office of the Son, as sent of the Father, audibly to speak His words to the patriarchs, to Moses and others, under the former, and to His disciples and the Jewish people under the present dispensation.

It was to supply, to the disciples, the apostles, and the Church, the place of Christ's personal presence and teachings after His resurrection and ascension, that the official agency of the Spirit was promised and exerted, as it was vouchsafed and exerted towards the prophets and sacred penmen of the Old Testament. That official agency was as necessary, and as much a provision of the eternal covenant, to Enoch, Noah, the patriarchs, Moses, and all the prophets after him, as to the apostles and evangelists of the New Testament. It was a part of the works towards creatures, by which the will of the Father was executed. Therefore, when about to withdraw as to His local, personal presence and ministry, Christ said, "The Comforter," that is, the Paraclete, the Monitor, or Teacher, "which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will *send in my name*, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance"—realize anew to your consciousness—"whatsoever I have said unto you." "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me. . . . When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth: *for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He shall show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto*

you. All things that the Father hath are mine : therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you. It is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, *I will send Him unto you.*" (John 14-16.) Such is the express commission and office of the Spirit, as Messenger of the Father and Son, delegated to speak not of Himself, not His own words, but only the words of the Father and Son. As the words which the Son spoke, were, 1, the words of the Father, officially representing the Godhead, and 2d, His words, as having received them in His delegated character from the Father ; so the words which the Spirit officially spoke, recalled, inspired into the minds of the apostles and sacred writers, were the words of Christ as received by Him, and of the Father primarily prescribing them as the will of the self-existent, eternal, invisible Deity. They are, therefore, in the most absolute and exclusive sense, the words of God—the published, irrevocable, infallible declarations—in the only form adapted to intelligent creatures, of Himself, of His will, of His relations, of the rules and measures of His administration, and the rules of human faith and conduct ; His words, not to men only, but to the whole universe : not for time only, but for all the future of His kingdom : the instrument of all spiritual influences ; the basis on which all holy intelligencies in heaven and earth, are at length to be united.

He who denies this delegated office of the Spirit, in relation to the words of Scripture, must equally deny the delegated office of Christ in relation to the words, audibly spoken by Him : and he who holds to and believes



in the reality and limitation of these offices in respect to the New Testament economy, must equally believe in them in respect to the Old. For in this respect the two economies are identical, founded on the same covenant, parts of the same system, executed by the same Divine Persons, in the same relations, and issuing in the same specific result, the publication of the Word of God in writing.

#### IV. THE NATURE OF DIVINE INSPIRATION.

The way is thus prepared, to show what is the nature of Divine Inspiration; and I define it to be an act of God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, by which He breathed into the mind of the sacred writers, the words which they uttered in writing. Or, in other words: It is an act of the Holy Spirit, in His delegated official capacity, by which He conveyed into the minds of the holy prophets and sacred writers, the words of God, as they uttered them vocally and in writing.

This is clearly contained in the Spirit's commission as Teacher of all things, remembrancer of all that Christ had spoken, exhibitor of things to come, and of all things relating to the Father and the Son. The word Inspiration signifies an act of breathing into—inspiring words into the mind by an act resembling that of inspiring air into the lungs. This is its only meaning as used in Scripture. The Scriptures speak of this, and of no other kind of inspiration. It is an act by which something is conveyed from one person

to another; and in Scripture is often understood and implied where the word itself is not inserted. But it is inserted where a general affirmation is made, concerning the entire Scriptures as the Word of God. As (2 Tim. 3:16) "*All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God.*" All Scripture, all the words written in the holy books—given, imparted, conveyed by inspiration—the act of God the Spirit breathing them into the minds of the writers: equivalent to saying, all the words which God in the person of the Father, saw fit, and determined to have written as His, on His authority, in His name, as the infallible rule of faith and life to His rational creatures, He in the Person of the Holy Ghost, conveyed immediately by inspiration to the intelligent consciousness of those whom He appointed to write them.

When this inspired affirmation was uttered by the pen of Paul, the canon of Old Testament Scriptures had long been settled, and at least two, and probably three of the Gospels, all the other Epistles of Paul, those of Peter, and probably the whole New Testament, except the Gospel, Epistles, and Revelation of John, had been written and were extant; and there can be no reason assigned why Paul should not have included these writings in all Scripture given by inspiration, which would not equally have prevented Peter, in his second Epistle, referring to all the Epistles of Paul as containing things which the ignorant and unstable wrested, as they did also *the other Scriptures*, to their own destruction. What was meant by the Scripture, the Holy Scriptures, the Word of God, was, at least, as correctly understood at that period as

it is at present. They are quoted and referred to by the New Testament writers, as the Word of God, spoken by the Spirit, by the mouth of the writers. Thus in Heb. 3, the writer, after contrasting Christ as the Son over His own house, and as the Apostle, that is, the Messenger, with Moses, who was faithful as a servant, adds: "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, 'To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation in the day of temptation in the wilderness,'" etc. This is taken from the ninety-fifth Psalm, where there is no verbal reference to the Spirit, and we only know of this as of the other Psalms, that the Spirit spake by the writer. And Stephen, (Acts 7,) when charging his accusers of having persecuted the Prophets, and with not having kept the Law which they had received by the instrumentality of *Messengers*, says: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised *in heart and ears*, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." They resisted the Holy Ghost speaking in the Scriptures by the mouth of the Prophets and Messengers of Jehovah. Again, Acts 1, "Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas. . . . For *it is written* in the Book of Psalms, 'Let his habitation be desolate,'" etc. See Psalm 109, where, however, there is no allusion to the Spirit.

The foregoing is, I apprehend, in harmony with all that we are taught in Scripture concerning the person, offices, and agencies of the Holy Spirit. His acts are official acts. The terms by which he is distinguished,

are titular, official designations. The word Spirit primarily signifies *breath*, *air*, and was with obvious propriety, appropriated to signify that essence and life which is invisible and omnipresent. God is a Spirit. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are in essence the same. But in their official relations and agencies, each is distinguished by titles not common to the others. These titles indicate the peculiar offices and works of the respective persons. The offices and works of the Holy Spirit, include the inspiration of the Scriptures, and then the use of the words of Scripture, as His exclusive instrument, in convincing the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; in teaching, renewing, and sanctifying men; in working in them repentance, faith, and obedience; applying to them the benefits of the redemption purchased by Christ, turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, working in them to will and to do the works of righteousness, sealing and preserving them to the day of final redemption. It is not by new revelations that He accomplishes these results, but by the written Word of God, which He Himself breathed into the sacred writers; His own word, the instrument of His officially subordinate agency. Hence the qualifying epithets by which He is distinguished with reference to His peculiar works. As the Author of the Holy Scriptures, and of all holiness in man, He is denominated the Holy Spirit; as Teacher, the Spirit of Truth, whom the world can not receive—the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father; and in various relations, the Spirit of Holiness, the Spirit of Faith, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ.

Of Him it is affirmed, that men are born or the Spirit; that they are chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; that they are led, taught, guided by the Spirit.

It is thus apparent that the official agency of the Spirit is founded in the eternal covenant, and is co-extensive with the work of redemption, in its details, its efficacious application, and its final issues. From the beginning, all revelations of the Father's will, as they were uttered by the voice or pen of subordinate human messengers, were immediately inspired into their minds by the Spirit as they uttered them. This was His office as much with respect to every portion as to any portion of the sacred oracles. They are the words of God, conveyed, breathed into, realized to the consciousness of men, by the Holy Spirit. If Enoch was a holy man, the Spirit changed his heart and made him so. If he uttered predictions concerning the murmurers and time-servers of the present dispensation, and the yet future coming of Christ with His holy myriads to execute judgment upon all the ungodly, they were inspired into his mind by the Holy Spirit, as they were into the mind of Jude as he wrote them. There is, I rest assured, no legitimate, no consistent, no Scriptural view of the subject but this. And in my judgment there are no difficulties incident to this view, at all comparable to the manifold and insurmountable difficulties which pervade and confound the views of those who treat of an influence on the



faculties of men as what they understand by inspiration, and hold to various kinds and degrees of that influence.

There is, so to speak, eternal and infinite harmony, consistency, propriety; order, system, proportion; reason, intelligence, wisdom; beauty, excellency, love, in all the counsels, acts, and ends of the Triune God, all the relations and agencies of the persons of the Godhead. These qualities of Divine perfection are, by the Spirit, disclosed to the faith which is of His operation, in the Holy Scriptures. And they are verbally disclosed to all as far as that was possible, in the words given by inspiration of the Spirit, concerning the eternal counsels and covenant, the offices and relations, the administrations and acts, of the respective persons of the Godhead. In what is ascribed to them respectively, there is no confusion, no interference with each other, no defect as to the final issue. To the Holy Spirit pertained all that relates to the communication of the will of God to man, in the sacred writings, the written word of God.

It is obvious to remark, that upon this doctrine of Divine Inspiration, and this view of the whole case, depends the theory, the doctrine, the ordinance, the instrumentality of the ministry of the Gospel. The ministers of the Gospel are called and commissioned to preach, not philosophy, not their own wisdom, not any human system, not what the office and commission of prophets and apostles forbid their preaching, but the word of God as written by them by inspiration of the Spirit, as the infallible standard of truth, and rule of faith and practice. The standard, the rule, the truth itself is



extant, and unalterably fixed in the inspired writings. To go aside from these, to add to them, to detract from them, is at their peril. If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. They are committed to writing to be the fixed, permanent, unalterable standard to all the subordinate messengers of the Spirit whom He makes overseers, teachers, ministers, in His work of calling, regenerating, and sanctifying men. He who preaches the word which he inspired, preaches that which is His instrument in the renovation and sanctification of men. If any man preach any other Gospel than that which Paul preached, not in his own words, but in the words which the Spirit taught him, "let him be accursed." (Gal. 1 : 9.) "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life," etc. (See Revelation 22 : 19.)

#### V. WERE THE VERY WORDS OF GOD CONVEYED TO THE SACRED WRITERS BY INSPIRATION?

But the question very naturally arises, Is it indeed the very *words* of Scripture upon which so much stress is laid? Are we bound to believe that the words of the original texts of the Holy Scriptures are the words of God, as truly as if He had audibly dictated them to the writers? Supposing even that all the thoughts—not merely those concerning Original Revelations, but all that might be naturally known to men—were specially selected and communicated to the Sacred Writers,

is it necessary to suppose that all the words also were communicated, and that they wrote those very words, and had no discretion whatever in the choice of words? Human wisdom is gravelled and stumbled at this: as though it were unworthy of the Creator and Lawgiver of men, the Author of language, and Maker of man's mouth, or impossible to Him, to cause His own words to be written as the fixed and permanent expression of His thoughts, and the infallible rule of human faith and life. Good men, even the best of men, and the best of critics and commentators, while with respect to every particular passage of Scripture, they believe in their hearts that it is the Word of God, as really as any other passage, and quote, criticise, and comment on it as such, nevertheless are reserved, hesitating, non-committal, as to any explicit declaration concerning the whole.

Take for example the critical work of Dr. Stier, entitled "The Words of the Lord Jesus," of which it is the object "to unfold the meaning and harmony of all *the recorded words* which fell from the lips of the Word made flesh." The very definition of what he undertook to do, and every sentence of his elaborate, and in point of evangelical excellence, unequalled exegesis, implies that he most firmly believed that the recorded words were the very words of Christ. He assumed that, he believed it, he, time and again, asserts it: without that, his work had no basis, his labor no object, his conclusions no authority. The question met him at the outset, "Have we these words just as He spoke them?" "This," he answers, "is the question of modern criticism, which refuses to take for

granted what should, however, be taken for granted by all who believe in a Revelation by the Son of God; namely, that His words can not have fallen to the ground, can not have dropped and been lost through the sieve of erring human composition. Yes, we possess *that which He spake* ! Not indeed in the letter of the *verba ipsissima*, but through the mediating witness of the Evangelists, elevated in the Spirit. Yet are they *truly and essentially the ipsissima*, as His teaching for the world and the Church." This answer is good for the heart, but not sufficient, or in point, for the understanding. It leaves that unexplained to which the question relates; and advances an inference from premises, which, not being self-evident, are to be taken for granted. Then as to the very words, there is an indefiniteness, an uncertainty, which gives scope and point to the question. But if they are not His words *verbatim et literatim*, why should the words themselves be criticised and expounded as His? If they are not in that sense His words, how can a critical exegesis of them show that what they signify is identical with what was signified by the words which he actually uttered? If they are not His words in that literal sense, but yet contain His teaching for the world and the Church, why not pass by the words and criticise the teaching only? But says the author, "His words can not have fallen to the ground, can not have dropped and been lost through the sieve of erring human composition;" as if the words recorded were the very words that had been vocally uttered; and as if the writers, in recording them, had been supernaturally withheld from losing them, and preserved from error in writing. But

if the Evangelists were *compositors*, or had any discretion, or any thing whatever to do with selecting out of all that was spoken by Christ, what they should respectively write, how did it happen that one wrote so much more than others of them, and that altogether they recorded so small a portion of the words uttered by Him in the hearing of the disciples? How came they actually to drop, omit, leave unrecorded an indefinitely large proportion of all that the Saviour did and said? (See John 20 : 30 ; 21 : 25.) Either they are His words in the same sense as all the words of Scripture are the words of God, as having been audibly uttered or verbally inspired by Him, or they are merely the words of the Evangelist compositors, and should be expounded as such. The author's faith is right ; but his explanation for the guidance of others to the same result, falters and fails. Practically and experimentally, by way of accounting for his "rigid adherence to the written word," he says: "I read the canonical text of the Bible, as written through the Holy Ghost ; but I so read it, not because I have framed for myself any inspiration dogma, . . . but because this word approves itself with ever-increasing force as inspired to my reason, which, though not indeed sound, is through the virtue of that word daily recovering soundness. It is because this living Word in a thousand ways has directed, and is ever directing, my inner being, with all its intelligence, thought, and will, that I have subjected to it the freedom of my whole existence." But he adds an explanation which seems substantially to express, and really to involve, what I am endeavoring to inculcate respecting the

office-work of the Spirit in conveying to the Sacred writers the very words which they wrote: "The great and fundamental deficiency of *nearly* all learned exegesis, with which mine must forever differ, is its misapprehension of *the depth and fullness of meaning* which, in accordance with its higher nature, necessarily belongs to *every word of the Spirit*. Though believed to be *the word of God*, it is treated superficially and on principles of partial and one-sided deduction, just as if it were *the word of man*. In the endeavor to understand it, that depth is not explored where, from the one root of the *sensus simplex*, the richest fullness of references spring up and ramify in such a manner, that what upon the ground and territory of its immediate historical connection, presents one definitely apprehended truth as the kernel of its meaning, does nevertheless expand itself into an inexhaustible variety of senses for the teaching of the world in all ages, and especially in the Church, where the Holy Spirit Himself continues to unfold *His germinal word*, even to the end of the days. While this applies to *every word of the Spirit* in its several measure, to *the words of the Word*, it applies without measure, to an extent which eternity only will disclose! . . . . The preparatory prophetic word finds its end and goal in the word of Christ: the apostolical word rests upon Him as its foundation, is in Him already in its rudiments performed. . . . As to those who believe in the Lord, and yet through a pernicious pseudo-science, either can not or will not bow to that miracle of the Holy Ghost—the *sure transmission of His life and words* in the Gospels, which are the central word in the whole invisible Scripture, may



the Spirit of Truth bear more and more convincingly *His own witness to His own testimony*, which tolerates no correction of man." (Stier. Preface, vol. i., London Ed.) Again in his critical comments: "Which, then, out of the multitude of His words, should be committed to record for the world and the Church? . . . . The selection and arrangement were not left with man, but were the prerogative of the Holy Spirit, concerning whom the Lord's promise was, 'He shall glorify Me, for He shall take of Mine, and show it unto you.' " . . . . "We find in the Gospels a preliminary series of first words, which the Spirit has selected as the most critical in their occurrence, and most distinctive in their expression. . . . The Lord did actually thus speak them, but His Spirit alone could with perfect fidelity reproduce them in the Scripture, and hand them over to the Church."

"The Evangelists, according to the wisdom of the Holy Ghost, were under the necessity of distributing in portions what was allotted to them to record. . . . How familiarly the Lord's thought and language attach themselves to those *Old Testament typical expressions* in which the spirit had already prophetically exhibited all the germs of the New Testament communication. . . . We have through the intervention of the Holy Ghost, the entire actual Sermon on the Mount, which we may hear and understand even as it was spoken by the Lord Himself, . . . the Spirit of Christ Himself, who spake by the prophets, expounds and opens to us by the mouth of Jesus and His apostles, His own fore-written word; and bears witness to it as now first fulfilled, and now first



accessible *in its full and consummate meaning*, to our understanding. We can not penetrate too deeply into the words of the Holy Ghost, specially can not we hold too firmly by the principle, that the quotations and expositions of the Old Testament in the New, give to us the right key for their interpretation."

These are samples of his spontaneous deliverances, from time to time, in the progress of his exegesis of the very words of Christ as reproduced in the writings of the Evangelists. Yet, turning again to his Preface, we find him reserved as to his doctrinal or theoretical view of inspiration, and impatient at the abuse heaped upon him by the non-verbalists and deniers of any real inspiration of the Scriptures. "I hold fast," he says, "the rigid *inspiration* of the Word in which we find and possess the Christ, yet not in the mechanical fashion of that orthodoxy which seems sometimes to gaze in blank amazement at Him who was born of woman, as if He had fallen from heaven in his swaddling-clothes; this I must finally and most earnestly beg every one to observe, *on account of the persevering injustice with which I have been treated on this particular.*" To which he adds in a note to his second edition: "This unjust treatment still continues—eight years after this was first written. Probably I may be able to exhibit, after a while, more clearly, in what way my *rigid* and yet not *mechanical* view of Inspiration is on either hand distinguished from the old and the new doctrine."

But have we indeed, as recorded in the Gospels, the very words of Christ? The difficulties which critics and expositors find in this question are not resolved by any of their theories of explanation. What relates

to the difference of expression in the details of the same narratives by different Evangelists, is now as far from being satisfactorily accounted for, as at any former period. Yet the Gospels are the word of God. The original text claims to give the words of Christ. The different expressions in parallel passages do not indeed involve any contradictions. But in recording the same fact, one Evangelist employs more words than another, and to some extent different words; each, however, when relating what was said by Christ, professing to give his words. To impute this to different degrees of accuracy in the memories of the different writers, to their ignorance, their carelessness, or any other imperfection in them, can not be satisfactory to any one; even with respect to what two of them personally heard from the lips of Christ, and saw of His acts; and much less of the other two, who were not original witnesses of His words or works. What was their authority for recording as the words of Christ, different words from those relating to the same fact, which the other writers record as having been heard by them? Be it that the different words in each instance are of the same significance, how came they to employ different words as the words of Christ in any instance? The fact that they did this, stands out conspicuously on the record, and must in some way be consistent with the Divine authority and infallibility of the original text. To say that the Evangelists wrote under a Divine influence assisting them in the exercise of their faculties—"an influence on their understandings, imaginations, memories, and other mental powers"—an influence of "superintend-

ence, elevation, direction, guidance, suggestion," can in no degree serve to obviate this difficulty ; but on the contrary, aggravates it. To suppose one writer to be divinely guided to use certain words in a particular sentence vocally uttered by Christ, and another writer to be guided to use other words in his record of the same sentence, under color of their having been the words which He actually uttered, must appear to every one to be contradictory and impossible.

The attempts to account for the fact in question, that have fallen in my way, whether by rationalists, who suppose the writers not to have been under any supernatural influence whatever, and to have been not learned but ignorant men ; or by those who suppose them to have been assisted by a supernatural influence on their faculties, appear to me in no respect to abate, but greatly to enhance this difficulty. That which the latter class allege as influence, and call inspiration, is not inspiration in the sense of Scripture ; it is assistance rendered to man in the exercise of his natural faculties ; Divine assistance alleged to account for what on the face of it, appears plainly inconsistent and contradictory.

To account for this seeming difficulty, we must recur to the prophetic office of Christ ; and to His exercise of that office through the agency of the Holy Spirit, sent by Him to inspire His words into the minds of the sacred writers, as He Himself was sent by the Father to speak His words. That in this relation it was the office of the Holy Spirit to teach, renew the conscious memory of, convey by inspiration to, the Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostolic Messengers of

Christ, His words, to be uttered vocally or in writing, by them, appears to me to be as clearly evident from Scripture, as that He had officially any relation whatever to the sacred writings, or to the authoritative and infallible utterances of prophets and apostles. Therefore it is, that the canonical Scriptures, all that the appointed Messengers wrote officially, is, in the nature of the case, and by the declarations of the Scriptures themselves, the Word of God. This view of the matter is pointedly confirmed by a circumstance, which those who mistake *influence* for *inspiration*, seem wholly to overlook, and which is in the last degree incompatible with their doctrine. For how could an influence on their memories enabling them to recall the words which they heard from the lips of Christ, supply them with the very words which they wrote in another and wholly different language? It is conceded by all, that the vocal utterances of Christ, in his personal and public addresses, were not in Greek, but in Aramaic, a form or dialect of the Hebrew language, then common to the Jews of Palestine. Matthew and John therefore heard from His lips, not the Greek words which they wrote, but Hebrew words, which were vernacular to them. Mark and Luke did not even hear those words themselves; and if those words were reported to them by those who heard them, still they are not the Greek words which they wrote. The recalling to memory, however accurately, the very words which Christ had spoken, would not be recalling the Greek words which they wrote. How then did these unlearned fishermen become possessed of Greek words which exactly and infallibly expressed the same

thoughts which Christ had vocally expressed only in Hebrew words? And how are the Greek words which they actually wrote, His words?

These questions can not be answered on any theory of influence on their faculties. But they involve nothing mysterious or paradoxical, when it is considered that Christ executed His prophetic office in part through that official agency of the Holy Spirit by which He gave to the sacred penmen, word for word, what He received from Christ for that purpose. "The Holy Ghost whom I will send, shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." Though He had spoken to the Jews in their vernacular tongue, which the common people understood, He determined to have His Gospel written and published, at a later period, in the copious, polished, and established language both of educated Jews and Gentiles, and to a considerable extent the most popular language in the cities and provinces of the Roman Empire. It was intended not for the Jews except temporarily and as orally delivered; but for the nations. The Aramaic, as a vernacular, was soon to be superseded, as the abrogation of the Levitical institutions, the destruction of the Temple, and the conquest and dispersion of the Jewish people, were soon to happen. Admitting then that His infallible words were to be given to the nations for all future time, and that the written words of the Greek text are His words, as truly as the Hebrew were His by which He had orally expressed the very same thoughts, facts, doctrines, promises, threatenings, precepts, predictions, is there any alternative to the conclusion, or any room for hesitation in saying that He gave those



words to the Spirit as His Messenger, sent to convey them by His act of inspiration to those selected and appointed to write them? Is it not apparent that this was what He was promised, commissioned and sent to do?—to teach the subordinate messengers what they should utter and write in the name and as the words of Christ; or, more briefly, Himself to utter by their mouths and pens, the words received by Him as the immediate Messenger of Christ, acting in His place after His personal withdrawment from the scene in which He directly exercised His office as the Messenger of the Father.

On this view it is obvious and consistent to suppose, that just those thoughts and words were by the Spirit conveyed to the respective Evangelists which they were respectively to utter; to one concise, to another more extended narratives of the same events; to one facts, doctrines, predictions, which were wholly withheld from the others. Undoubtedly the Divine Wisdom must have determined these peculiarities. And now admitting the Greek words to have been the words of Christ Himself, by the Spirit as His Messenger, so conveyed to the three most unlearned, and the one least unlearned of the four Evangelists, it is obvious to consider them unequally qualified by their knowledge of Greek, to receive and write the same words to express the same thoughts in every instance. That in writing they retained the free and intelligent exercise of their faculties, no one doubts. But to be consistent with that, the Omniscient Revealer must have caused such words, in every instance, to be conveyed to them as they were qualified to receive and



understand; and this accounts, on a solid and sufficient footing, for the fact that different words are sometimes employed by the different writers to express the same thought in the same connection. The promise that the Spirit "should bring all *things* to their remembrance," can not mean that He should bring the Hebrew, Syro-Chaldaic, or Aramaic words of Christ to their remembrance in order to their writing them verbatim as they heard them; for they did not write those words. It may mean that He should bring distinctly to their remembrance the *things*, facts, events, to which those words related, so that they might discern the appropriateness of the Greek words which they received and wrote. "When the Comforter"—Teacher, Monitor—"is come whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me. . . . When He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth;" that is, by speaking, "for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you. He shall teach you all things, whatsoever I have said unto you." Now in this promise of the official agency of the Spirit, the subject is that of teaching, conveying intelligence in words in a manner equivalent to, or identical with, speaking—speaking what, as a Messenger, He heard—taking the words of Christ, and showing, imparting them to the apostles. If this was

not specifically His office in this relation, and in distinction from His official agency in the renovation and sanctification of men; and if the words of Christ were not so given to Him, and given by His inspiring agency to the apostles, let those who can, tell us how the sacred penmen became possessed of what they wrote, and how what they wrote is the word of God? But if such was the office of the Spirit in this relation, if, in the absence of Christ, the Spirit received what He intended should be written, and communicated it to those appointed to write his words—as when called before magistrates, He taught, imparted to, the apostles what they should say, at the moment of their utterance—then what they wrote is the infallible word of God, conveyed to mankind by Christ in the exercise of his prophetic office through the official agency of the Spirit sent by Him, and the subordinate agency of those human messengers whom He appointed to commit His words to writing.

This view, I venture to affirm, accords with all that is taught us on the subject in the Holy Scriptures, according to their verbal and apparent meaning, and according to all those researches and expositions of modern criticism, which treat them as of Divine authority. The Logos from the beginning, the Messenger Jehovah in the early, the Incarnate Word in the present dispensation, is the Revealer of God to the world, in works and word; the prime official agent of all intelligible revelations, communications, and instructions. His prophetic offers comprehended and provided for all the verbal communications ever made to the human race. He is, in this relation, the Light

of the World. He fulfilled His prophetic office chiefly, under the ancient dispensation, by His own direct agency, till he appointed Prophets to be His messengers; and under the present dispensation, till He commissioned Apostles to be His messengers. The Spirit conveyed His word to prophets and apostles, and through their subordinate agency to the world. He maintained His office and prerogative as Revealer of the will of God, and teacher of mankind, as part of the work delegated to Him in virtue of the eternal covenant. The Holy Scriptures so conveyed are therefore the word of God.

On no other view but this can either the fact that in parallel passages one Evangelist uses, in particular instances, different words from another, nor the far more striking fact, that, in general, when narrating the same occurrence, they use *precisely the same words*, be satisfactorily accounted for. This coincidence is most remarkable in the parallel passages of Matthew and Luke, of whom one had been a disciple and hearer of Christ, which the other had not. Neither of them refers to what the other had written, nor is there any historical evidence or probability that the second of the two had seen the Gospel of the first. Their identity of expression is the more remarkable, when we consider that Matthew was a Jew; Luke a convert from heathenism: that Matthew wrote his Gospel at Jerusalem; Luke his about the same time, most probably, at Rome: that Matthew had it specially in view to show that Jesus was the Messiah foretold by the prophets, and to instruct Jewish converts; while Luke had special reference to converts from heathenism: and,

lastly, that Luke was, from his education and experience, a far more accomplished writer of Greek than Matthew. The supposition advanced by some writers, that they both copied from shorter memoirs, is too derogatory to the whole subject to be worthy of a moment's consideration. Every thing relating to the antecedents, the personal character, and the qualifications, as well as the verbal coincidences of these writers, demands our belief that the words which they wrote were inspired into their minds at the time of their writing.

Again, let it be observed, that if the Gospel in *Hebrew*, to which Jerome and others refer as extant, was written by Matthew, as they suppose, for the special use of believing Jews, it is, according to the most competent and reliable writers upon the subject, entirely certain, from internal evidence, that the Greek Gospel of Matthew was not a translation from the Hebrew text, but an independent and original work. And accordingly, supposing the Hebrew Gospel to have been used to a limited extent, and to have served a temporary purpose, the Greek Gospel of Matthew alone obtained currency in the Western churches, it being settled by their own testimony that the earliest Fathers did not use, or even possess, the Gospel of Matthew in any other than the Greek form, in which we now possess it. His Gospel, therefore, as we have it, is not a record of the very words which he heard from the lips of Christ; but is a record of the words of Christ in Greek, conveyed to him by the Spirit as he wrote them. It is preposterous, considering the infinite sacredness and importance of the subject, to suppose

with Olshausen, "That Matthew himself, when he had composed the Hebrew Gospel, executed likewise a *free translation*, or new composition of it in the Greek language. It makes no essential difference," he adds, "if we suppose that *a friend of Matthew wrote the Greek work under his direction and authority*; but Matthew's authority must necessarily be supposed to have been the means of the diffusion of the Gospel, as otherwise it is inexplicable that there does not appear the faintest trace of any opposition to it." On this, I need only remark: 1. That on this supposition both the verbal discrepancies and coincidences between Matthew and the other Evangelists would be unaccountable and incredible in the very last degree. 2. That the Hebrew Gospel, as the author last quoted expressly says, "differed from our Greek Gospel of Matthew, for it contained *many things* wanting in our Gospel." How then could the Greek be palmed off upon Matthew's, or upon any one's, authority as an honest, not to say an authoritative and infallible translation of the Hebrew? Suppose Matthew to have written the Hebrew Gospel, in his official character, and put it in circulation as of Divine authority. Would he have made for permanent and universal circulation a partial translation to supersede the original of his own Gospel, omitting *many things*, equally parts of his Gospel with the rest? 3. It is a desperate supposition, that Matthew, from lack of sufficient knowledge of the Greek tongue, for that is the implied and only conceivable reason, procured a friend to translate and garble his Gospel, under his own direction and authority. For how could he direct or authorize the use



of words which he did not understand? If such was his predicament, it is inevitable that the Greek words were not furnished by a friendly scholar in the capacity of translator; but were given to him by Inspiration of God, the Holy Ghost, as he wrote them.

On the supposition that Christ Himself appointed the times, the writers, the things to be written, and all the particulars and circumstances relating to the writing and publication of the different Gospels, the whole matter is intelligible and plain; and this supposition is abundantly more than authorized, by the fact that the Gospels as written are of Divine authority and infallibility, and by the acknowledged character and office of Christ, as the Revealer of God, the Divine Prophet, Teacher, Redeemer, and Saviour of men. But every attempt of learned critics and commentators to account for the phenomena, by assigning mere private, prudential, personal reasons, why the respective Evangelists wrote as they did in respect to matter and manner, what kind of assistance Mark had from Peter, and Luke from Paul, and under what influence and sanction the Gospels of these two Evangelists obtained public confidence and established currency, does but lower the subject down to the level of mere human wisdom. If the words which Mark wrote were not directly inspired into his mind as he wrote them; if he in his private capacity, not having himself witnessed the things which he relates, sat down to write without a full and perfect knowledge of what he should say, of what avail can it be for the critics to inform us that, in the opinion of the Fathers, or some of them, he was at some period an associate of Peter, and therefore



probably wrote his Gospel under the direction of that Apostle; and therefore, that his Gospel may reasonably be considered as of *Apostolic* authority? May it not be Divine, the very word of God, without having been written under the direction of an Apostle? If Peter dictated to Mark what he should write, as Jeremiah did to Baruch, and as Paul did to Tertius, why was not that fact stated, and the writing called the Gospel of Peter? If Mark wrote unofficially as a private man, and the words which he wrote were inspired into the mind of Peter, why did not Peter write them? He wrote Epistles, why should he not write a Gospel? He was a Disciple of Christ, and heard His words, and he was an Apostle; Mark was neither.

The same course of remark and interrogation is obvious in respect to Luke; who, not being an apostle, and not having been a disciple, the critics, for similar reasons, imagine to have written his Gospel under the direction of Paul. I humbly conceive that all such theories and conceits in respect to the origin of the Gospels, proceed upon the assumption that mere human agency, human wisdom and discretion, human policy and skill, were concerned in the production of those Divine records of the very words of the Divine official Revealer and Messenger of the Father, Prophet and Teacher of the world. The very same men who can repose on the hypothesis that Mark owed what he wrote to the assistance of Peter as an Apostle, can, on another hypothesis, entertain doubts of the genuineness of the second Epistle of Peter himself, which he begins by declaring himself "a servant and an Apostle of Jesus Christ." This passes for learning. The Gos-

pel of Mark written under the direction of Peter, the Gospel of Luke written under the direction of Paul—and yet both of them the word of God—the very words of Christ. This passes for *learning* with men who shrink from the idea of verbal inspiration.

The first three Gospels consist mainly of the verbal discourses of Christ, narratives of His miraculous cures, His journeys, and the like. The Gospel of John has, in its details, little in common with the other three. It omits for the most part what they had particularly described, and consists chiefly of original doctrinal statements and discussions. Now if what Matthew wrote was just what he remembered of the acts and discourses of the Saviour, and if his remembering it was the reason why he wrote his Gospel, how is it to be accounted for that he remembered and wrote so little of all that is recorded by John? And how should it happen that John, when near an hundred years of age, should so well remember the most abstruse discussions and lofty discourses concerning spiritual and heavenly subjects, and yet recall, or have brought to his remembrance, so little of what was said in connection with the impressive scenes and events of the Saviour's life and pilgrimage? Surely we must needs conclude that, whatever they remembered, neither of them had any thing to do in deciding the question, what they should write. And still more preposterous is it to imagine that Mark or Luke could have had any thing to do with that question. The Infinite Wisdom of Him whose words were to be recorded, in the execution of His prophetic office, prescribed, in all respects, as He was instructed by the Father, as to the time

when, the persons by whom, and the words in which his own oral discourses, and all that concerned His life, His acts, His teachings, His death and resurrection, and all the future of His Kingdom should be recorded. Any thing short of this is too palpably derogatory to Him, and to the subject in every relation, to be for a moment admitted. The announcements to be made, and the events which were to occur, were in the power of the Father to be manifested by the Son in His official work in their due order of succession. There was a fixed and critical moment for every act and event of His life. Hence, though to Him as the Messenger of the Father, all power in heaven and earth was given to be exercised in the fulfillment of His delegated work, yet when questioned as to things not yet to be disclosed, He says: "To sit on my right hand, and my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." . . . "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." . . . "My time is not yet come. . . . My Father worketh hitherto and I work. . . . The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth—that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him. . . . I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just: because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. . . . The works which

the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me. . . . I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him. . . . I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And He that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone. . . . I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but He sent me. . . . I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day—as long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world. . . . Say ye of Him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest because I said, I am the Son of God? The hour is come when the Son of man should be glorified. . . . Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. . . . I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak. . . . When Jesus *knew* that His hour was *come* that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, etc. . . . He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me. . . . No man cometh unto the Father, but by me. . . . The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works. . . . The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. . . . As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. . . . If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask, etc. . . . All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you. . . . I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou

gavest me out of the world. . . . I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest me. . . . I have given them Thy word. . . . As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I sent them, the Apostles, into the world."

Such are some of the expressions by which, on successive occasions, He taught the nature and extent of His prophetic office as the Messenger of the Father ; in connection with which, and with His appointment of the apostles to be His messengers, He pointedly instructed them, both by example in washing their feet, and by precept, that "The servant is not greater than his lord ; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him." By the mission of the Spirit, He fully provided for the utterance in writing of the Gospels and Epistles. But when, in the Apocalypse, new and more ample disclosures were to be made concerning His person, His works, and the future of His Kingdom, they were expressly given to Him by the Father. (Revelation 1 : 1.)

On this view of the office of Christ as Prophet, and His manner of executing it, so far as the Scriptures and the writing of them are concerned, through the official agency of the Holy Spirit sent by Him, the subject is, I humbly conceive, cleared, by what the Scriptures themselves teach, from the difficulties and paradoxes so commonly supposed to embarrass it. The ground on which the Holy Scriptures, are by Christ Himself, and by the Spirit in His name speaking in the subordinate messengers, prophets, and apostles, called the Word of God, is clearly manifest. What the Sacred Penmen wrote, was, word for word, what the Spirit



spoke, inspired into their minds, realized to their intelligent consciousness, as they wrote it. He spake by them as appointed, delegated, to receive and to utter in writing what He conveyed to them by inspiration; by them, by the Apostles, by the Evangelists, by all the prophets since the world began. The system, from the beginning, is one comprehensive, perfect, effectual system, for the infallible communication of the will of God to men. The original texts of Scripture were to the Levitical and Apostolic Churches, in matter and manner, just what they would have been had the Divine Messenger of the covenant dictated every word of them to the writers by His own vocal utterance, instead of conveying them, when He was personally absent, by the Spirit sent officially and expressly for that purpose.

Two only of the difficulties supposed to be incident to this view of inspiration, appear to me to require a word of explanation. If the very words which the sacred penmen wrote were dictated or conveyed by inspiration into their minds; if they had no liberty or discretion in the choice of subjects, or of words, how, it is asked, can it be possible that their own individual peculiarities and personal circumstances, acts, purposes, sympathies, hopes, fears, should be interposed as part and parcel of the sacred writings? To which I answer, that the entire scheme of mediation, intercourse, and fellowship between God and man involves and requires this. It was therefore necessary that the Divine Messenger Himself should be capacitated in human nature to sympathize in all that concerned His people individually and personally, to be touched with the feel-



ing of their infirmities, to succor and encourage in them the sanctified exercise of all the emotions and affections of their nature. Hence He employs men of like passions, sympathies, trials, with other men, to preach His word. There is a basis in their common nature for sympathy, attention, confidence, faith, on the part of the hearer, with the voice, the manner, the earnestness, the personal thoughts and feelings of the speaker. In like manner He employed the sacred penmen to write in His words whatever of their personal experience, feelings, affections, circumstances, history, He thought necessary for instruction, example, warning, or encouragement to others; using their thoughts and emotions as He used their pens, consistently with the free exercise of their faculties, and adapting His instructions to the sympathies of the readers, and availing Himself of the basis and medium of sympathy between the writers and readers. It is obvious that whatever, concerning the internal or external experience of the writers, was to be expressed in Scripture, must be expressed in perfect conformity to their consciousness, and therefore in words which they would naturally have used. And if the inspiration of those words was just as possible to the Omniscient Spirit as the inspiration of words to express, on other subjects, either what they did or what they did not know before, then there is no difficulty peculiar to the class of words in question; and they are the words of God in the same sense, and for the same reason, as all the other words of Scripture.

But, says the objector, this makes the writers mere machines; this is the mechanical theory of inspiration. This hackneyed phrase has had controlling influence

with the entire school of writers, who from the days of Whitby have copied each other in substituting for the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures an influence exerted more or less according to exigency, on the mental faculties of the writers. They do not condescend to explain how men in the intelligent and voluntary exercise of all their faculties, are any more made machines by writing words conveyed to them by inspiration than they would be by writing words audibly dictated to them, or copying words from a manuscript or from a printed book. Had they explained the phrase it would not have answered the purpose of creating and sustaining a prejudice against verbal inspiration. The real purport of the phrase is, that if the very words were inspired into the minds of the sacred writers, then they had no discretion either as to the choice of thoughts or words; and what they wrote of fact or narrative that was known to them before, is the word of God in the same sense and for the same reason as other parts of Scripture. Yet the same school of writers admit that the words which expressed predictions, and whatever they did not know before, must have been dictated, or otherwise prescribed and conveyed to the writers. Were they then machines in writing all the most essential parts of Scripture? And with respect to the historical narratives, is it not palpable that a resistless supernatural influence on their faculties, an infallible guidance, direction, superintendency, restraint from error, must have suspended the free exercise of their faculties, and really made them mere machines?

## VI. REFERENCE TO THE VERBAL INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING THE TABERNACLE AND THE LEVITICAL FAITH AND WORSHIP.

This view of the prophetic office, the nature of inspiration, and the merely ministerial relation and agency of the prophets and apostles, might be confirmed by reference to every part of Scripture. It was in the exercise of His prophetic office, that the Messenger Jehovah gave to Moses a minute verbal description, in exact conformity to which the tabernacle, the ark, the cherubim, the table, the candlestick, the altar were to be constructed. The description specifies the materials to be employed, and the dimensions and form of the tent or building, and of its several articles of furniture. Moreover a pattern of these several objects was shown to him in the Mount. The structure itself was to be the place of His official residence. It signified the body in which He was to appear incarnate. "Let them make me a sanctuary: that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." After describing the materials, size, form, and other particulars concerning the ark, the mercy-seat, and the cherubim, He adds: "And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee"—that is, His words in writing—"and there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two

cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." The details concerning the table, the candlestick, and the furniture connected with them, being given, it is said: "And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the Mount." Again after a more minute detail concerning the construction of the tabernacle, it is added: "And thou shall rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was showed thee in the Mount." A like injunction is given in respect to the altar. (Exod. 25—27.)

The reader will observe that not a word of this description was to be omitted or deviated from in the slightest degree. Every word was to be literally complied with. The pattern which was shown to Moses, and which no doubt gave him an impression more vivid and perfect than the verbal description could produce, could not be seen by the artificers who were to fabricate the objects described. To qualify them, therefore, to execute the prescribed work in perfect conformity to the verbal description, special gifts of the Holy Spirit were imparted to them. "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, See, I have called by name Bezaleel . . . and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, to work in gold, etc., etc. . . . and I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab . . . and in the hearts of all that are wise-hearted I have put wisdom; that they may make all that I have commanded thee: the tabernacle of the congregation, and

the ark of the testimony," etc., etc. (Exod. 31.) These designations and endowments are repeated in the thirty-fifth chapter; and in the thirty-sixth it is said: "Then wrought Bezaleel, and Aholiab, and every wise-hearted man, in whom the Lord put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, *according to all that the Lord had commanded.*" Then follows in the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth chapters a detailed statement of the things which they actually made, corresponding to the original prescription. Thus the tabernacle and all its furniture were produced through the agency of these artificers in exact conformity to the pattern shown to Moses in the Mount, and to the verbal description given to him there.

Now the facts recorded in this portion of sacred history, furnish, I apprehend, a legitimate and irrefragable argument to the effect: 1. That the words addressed to Moses were spoken by Jehovah in the exercise of His prophetic office. 2. That every word so spoken by Him is recorded verbatim as He uttered them. 3. That His words so spoken and recorded are the infallible word of God to be literally fulfilled. Like the pattern shown to Moses they have a background in the counsels of the Father, which leaves nothing in matter or manner to the competency or discretion of men. In this case it may be said that the typical purposes of the tabernacle, the ark, the altar, etc., required such literal exactness. But in what case of His teaching, directly or indirectly, may not the same be alleged and with equal force? The nature and object of His prophetic office and His teachings



forbid the assumption of any difference in these respects. We are here emphatically taught that His words, as written by His servants, are the infallible words of God, and must be complied with and vindicated to the letter. If vocal articulations, or their counterparts in writing, are not in every case sufficient to render an exact compliance feasible, He will interpose visible patterns, figures, emblems, types, symbols. The construction of His spiritual temple was the end, towards which the material tabernacle was but an auxiliary; and the argument from the facts above stated, is, that as the tabernacle was constructed in exact conformity to the verbal directions—the very words of Jehovah, to the exclusion of all dependence on human wisdom or discretion—so all the words of Scripture are His words, in exact accordance with which the spiritual house is built, the spiritual house of which God is the builder, the foundation being His own words written by apostles and prophets, the initiative, the chief corner, Jesus Christ.

The same minute particularity of verbal description is given, chapter thirty-eight, and afterwards, of the ephod, the breast-plate, the Urim and Thummim, the garments of the priests, the ceremonies of their consecration, the burnt offering, and all the sacrifices, offerings, rites, and observances prescribed in the ritual of worship. No deviation from the verbal directions could be permitted with impunity. When further instructions were necessary, either in the execution of the typical, ceremonial, or civil laws, they were verbally announced by Jehovah from between the cherubim.

To secure a like literal compliance with the word of



God, in respect to the materials, construction, and furniture of the temple, David received by the Spirit a like minute verbal description, (according to which he would seem to have constructed patterns,) which he delivered to Solomon, and which are summarily mentioned, 1 Chron. 28.

There is a deeper significance in all this than to a casual reader may appear on the surface. Moses was detained in the Mount, in the midst of the cloud, forty days and nights, to receive from the lips of Jehovah the instructions recorded in Exod. 25-31. Very probably he wrote them there as he received them; as David seems immediately to have written the instructions concerning the construction of the temple, which he received from the Spirit. In both cases the things to be constructed, and the sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies to be performed, were to constitute an outward, visible, and exact expression of the mind and will of God, concerning the person, offices, incarnation, sacrifice, and mediation of Christ, and the way of salvation through Him; an emblematic, pictorial, visible, representation of the leading truths of the Gospel. The verbal description therefore behooved to be given in His own words; and every precaution was accordingly taken that they should be exactly recorded and literally complied with. They were given by Him in the exercise of His office as prophet, and the whole procedure most directly concerned the glory of Jehovah as Lawgiver and Redeemer, as Prophet, Priest, and King. But the rest of the Scriptures were likewise given by Him in the exercise of His prophetic office. They are the outward, visible, permanent expression in words of

the mind and will of God, concerning the same things in one relation or another. When Moses had completed the works, "according to all that the Lord commanded him," the whole was divinely approved and sanctioned. "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle . . . the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys." (Exod. 40.)

Jehovah, having descended from Sinai and taken up his residence in the typical sanctuary, spake to Moses the words which constitute nearly the entire book of Leviticus. It contains in minute verbal detail, the laws, rites, and observances of the religious service enjoined upon the children of Israel, which were to be literally obeyed. If strictly obeyed, it promises abundant blessings. On the contrary, the least infraction as well as general neglect and disobedience, is threatened with specific or public and overwhelming judgments. It is to the previous instructions concerning the tabernacle and its furniture, what the Epistles of the New Testament are to the Gospels. Its spiritual instruction by visible acts and types, rendered exactness of verbal prescription absolutely indispensable. Accordingly, as is observed by Mr. Bonar, in his Commentary, "There is no book in the whole compass of that volume which the Holy Ghost has given us, that contains more of the very words of God than *Leviticus*. It is God that is the direct speaker in almost every page; His gracious words are recorded in the form wherein they were uttered. . . . The *Gospel* of the grace of

God, with all that follows in its train, may be found in Leviticus. . . . The rites here detailed were typical; and every type was designed and intended by God to bear resemblance to some spiritual truth. The likeness between type and antitype is never accidental."

Now a typical object or action can afford no definite and accurate instruction, unless the thing typified is verbally understood. The accuracy of the verbal representation is the test of the instruction conveyed by the type. A human face may be so distinctly described in words, that a stranger, on seeing an exact likeness on canvas, will with certainty recognize it. But if the verbal description was not perfectly accurate, he who saw the picture would be left in doubt and uncertainty. So in all these words of Jehovah in Exodus and Leviticus. They are His infallible words, recorded as He spoke them, as the criterion of the meaning of types, literally fulfilled in the antitypes, and vindicated in the history of those to whom they were addressed. As the words infallibly described what was to be exhibited and done in the Levitical worship, it was necessary that the typical objects and acts should be exactly conformable to the verbal description; otherwise they would be understood to signify and teach something else, and not what they were intended to signify. The leading doctrines of religion, and the meaning of their typical sacrifices, had, prior to Moses, been taught to the Patriarchs and others, directly by Jehovah Himself, and the New Testament references to their faith, show that they understood them. When the system was enlarged and perfected under Moses, many new types and typical actions were introduced.

The system was so enlarged and complicated as to require a minute verbal description of all the details. The signification of the added types and the whole tableaux of visible manifestations and acts was to be taught to the Priests and Levites, and through them to the people. And in order that the pictorial instruction should be infallibly correct—that the types when exhibited to the worshippers, should signify exactly what was intended by them—it was necessary that the exhibition should in every particular exactly correspond to the verbal directions; even as it was necessary that the things pertaining to the tabernacle should be made in exact conformity to the pattern shown to Moses in the mount, and to the verbal directions there given. Hence the incessant and scrupulous care enjoined upon the Priests, and practised by them, in administering this system.

Now from these premises, I think an unanswerable argument is to be derived, in proof of the verbal inspiration of all the words of Scripture. In all the directions above referred to, the words are confessedly the very words of Jehovah. The infallibility of the words, and an exact conformity to them in the acts, was essential to the accuracy of the instruction, the faith of the worshippers, and the acceptableness of their worship. Jehovah Himself, who prescribed the system, was personally present, beholding what took place. If, then, this system of typical instruction, this temporary ritual, these ceremonial observances, this scheme of discipline and faith, having for its end the erection of the spiritual house for “an habitation of God through the Spirit, required, 1st, to be prescribed

in the very words of its founder; and 2d, to be executed in exact conformity to the verbal prescription; is it not a legitimate and irresistible inference, that all those teachings, ordinances, prescriptions, whether in the Old or the New Testament, which were not aided and enforced by external and typical objects and acts, required, so much the more for that reason, to be given in His own infallible words as the rule of faith and life? Was the Levitical church built on the *verba ipsissima* of its founder, and the more advanced Christian church, built not on His own infallible words, but on words selected by men assisted according to exigency? Was Christ the architect, builder, teacher of the Levitical church, and not as truly and perfectly such of the Christian? Were the apostles as His Messengers, superior to Moses? Hear what the Scripture saith: "Consider the apostle—(*Messenger*)—and High-Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to *Him that appointed Him*, as also Moses was faithful in all His house. For He was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who hath builded the house, hath more honor than the house. For every house is builded by some one; but He that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all His house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over His own house; whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Heb. 3.) This passage was intended to demonstrate the superiority of Christ to Moses, and relates to the founding of the Levitical church—the house, the spiritual building, of which Moses was



a constituent. It shows: 1. That Jehovah, who conducted the children of Israel, and dictated His laws to them, was personally and officially the same as Christ Jesus, the Messenger of the Father. 2. That He built the church or house, and that it was His own. 3. That Moses was but a servant to Him; and hence, as He was the builder, teacher, guide, of the house under the Levitical system, He is the same in relation to the same house under the Christian system; and as Moses was but a servant, so are the apostles but servants in relation to that building. The general inference from the whole is, that Moses had not a particle of discretion in regard to the words which he wrote, nor in regard to a literal compliance with them; and for the same reason, the sacred writers who succeeded him could not exercise a particle of discretion. It would be every whit as consistent, and as scriptural, to ascribe to the prophets and apostles, the selection of those persons who should constitute *the house* and be fitly framed together for an habitation of God through the Spirit, (Eph. 2,) as to ascribe to them the selection of a single word of those Scriptures in conformity to which *the house* under all dispensations is constructed.

The argument from the foregoing premises, might be indefinitely illustrated and enlarged upon, so as to confirm by many particulars the one conclusion; and make it manifest, that as the tabernacle which was pitched in the wilderness by the instrumentality of Moses, had its perfect prototype in the pattern shown to him in the mount; so the Scriptures as the word of God, are the utterances of His mind and will in His own infallible words. They constitute in an external,



visible, and permanent form, His expression of His mind and will; the embodiment and tangible product of the prophetic office; the portraiture and mirror of His image; the medium of His converse and fellowship in the Spirit with His people; the instrument of the Spirit in illuminating, renewing, and sanctifying His people, and erecting them into His spiritual temple; the objective basis of their faith, the warrant of their prayers, the rule of their lives; His verbal testimony concerning Himself, and His past and future works.

#### VII. THE LOGOS AND THE SPIRIT REVEALED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT—THE FATHER CHIEFLY IN THE NEW.

The foregoing doctrine of the prophetic office of Christ and of His manner of executing it, till all that the Father had determined to have recorded for the permanent instruction of the Church and the world, was written, affords a sure basis for the doctrine of plenary verbal inspiration. He who from the beginning was officially the Revealer of the Father, received His words, and through the official agency of the Spirit, and the fitting instrumentality of men appointed for that purpose, communicated them to the world in the books of Holy Scripture; so that their original infallibility and Divine authority were neither diminished, nor in any manner hazarded by the transmission. All the purposes of the Divine wisdom respecting this world and the dependent universe, the entire adminis-

tration of law and government, providence and grace, over fallen creatures, through subordinate official agencies and instrumentalities, demanded that the words of God should be conveyed to man, without abatement of their infallibility or authority; for they constitute the rule of administration, and the only rule of human faith, conduct, accountability, and destiny, and as such abide forever, and are to be fulfilled to the letter in all intermediate and all final issues. He who, in virtue of the eternal covenant, took on Him this office of Revealer, Prophet, Messenger—was appointed heir of all things, and head over all things in their relations to His Church, and fulfills His mission, exercises His prerogatives, and rules His kingdom in this world in accordance with, and, so far as the obligations and agency of man are concerned, by the instrumentality of the word of God, recorded in the Holy Scriptures. In the incipient and prefigurative exercise of His *sacerdotal* office, He employed the subordinate instrumentality of the Aaronic priesthood, under a prescribed and rigid ritual. In the exercise of His *regal* office during His Theocratic administration, He appointed David and His lineal descendants, to represent Him. In the exercise of His *prophetic* office relatively to the writing of the Holy Scriptures, He sent the Spirit—His immediate, omniscient, infallible messenger—to impart the words to be written, to the prophets, apostles, and evangelists, whom He appointed to receive and write them; so that when written, they should have the same infallibility and authority, as if directly uttered by His voice, or recorded by His hand. This was alike demanded, by the nature and purpose of

His office, His relations, as Messenger of the Father, and as Lawgiver, Redeemer and Judge of men, and by the ignorance, the exigencies, and all the moral and spiritual relations of men.

His words are the indispensable element of man's faith in Him. Peoples, nations, individuals, that have them not, are wholly devoid of faith. His greatest utterances under the ancient and under the present dispensation, were identical with the forth-putting of His almighty power in the production of His visible works; and faith in the works as His, neither exists, nor is possible apart from His words. "It was He who said BE, and it was." "Let there be light, and there was light." "Behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh." "He said to Moses, Stretch out thy hand over the sea. . . . and He caused the sea to go back, . . . and the waters were divided." "He said," that is, *commanded*, let there be, "and there came divers sorts of flies. . . . He said, and the locusts came." "He sent His word and healed those who cried to Him, and delivered them from their destructions." "By the word of Jehovah, were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of His mouth." "He rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still; and the wind ceased and there was a great calm." . . . "He said, Lazarus, come forth; and he that was dead came forth." Hereafter, "all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth."

It would seem to have been the opinion of theological writers generally, of all denominations, not only that very little is to be found in the Old Testament

Scriptures concerning the Christ, either as preëxisting before His incarnation, or as exercising any of His mediatorial offices ; but that still less is recorded respecting any official agency of the Holy Spirit. Because with particular reference to His official works, He is expressly promised for the execution of them after the ascension, and the arrival of the day of the Pentecost, it seems to have been assumed that His official works were then to be commenced. It has, apparently, been taken for granted that the Scriptures of the Old Testament were a Revelation of the Father, and of His relations and acts towards creatures ; or of the self-existent Unity, without distinction of persons or offices. Whereas, rightly viewed, the Old Testament is for substance a Revelation of the Son in His delegated character, relations, offices, and acts ; and of the Spirit in His offices, as sent to communicate to the Prophets the words of the anointed Messenger of the Father, and to sanctify the souls of men through the instrumentality of the truths recorded. In reality, that which the New Testament adds to the teachings of the Old, is, preëminently, its Revelations concerning the Father. To this object the Gospel of John, from the third to the seventeenth chapters inclusive, and his first two Epistles, are more especially devoted : and the entire volume of New Testament Scriptures may be cited in evidence, that the Lord Jesus Christ is personally and officially identical with the Jehovah, the Messenger, (Angel,) Jehovah, the Messiah, of the Old Testament, under whatever names or titles His works may be ascribed to Him, in either case. To Him—the Logos from the beginning—the law, the prophets, and the Psalms relate.

Of Him — the Logos incarnate — the Apostles and Evangelists wrote. In His complex person, perfected by His incarnation, and visibly manifested to the world, He revealed, declared, made known the Father, as personally and officially distinguished from Himself, and as having sent Him to proclaim and execute His will. The Greek word translated Father occurs in the New Testament more than twelve-score times as a designation of *the Father*, in distinction from the Son and Spirit. The parallel Hebrew word, though sometimes employed in the sense of Creator, as in Isaiah 63 and 64, does not occur as distinctive of *the Father*, except prophetically, 2 Sam. 7 : 14, as quoted, Heb. 1 : 5. That He is distinctively referred to, however, under those names which indicate the Divine nature of the respective persons of the Godhead, is manifest in various places: as in Psalm 2 : 7, where the Son makes the declaration, "Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou art my Son," etc., and Psalms 22 : 1, etc. ; 45 : 2, 7 ; 110 : 4, and elsewhere. And that the Patriarchs, Moses, and the Prophets understood sufficiently to evolve and regulate their faith, what is more fully revealed in the Gospel, concerning the Father, is as evident as that they understood any thing distinctively of the Redeemer, the Sanctifier, and the method of salvation. The faith through which they were justified is expressly commended in the Gospel as the model of that of Christian believers. Their faith looked forward through covenants, promises, predictions, ordinances, types, as that of Christian believers looks back to the central manifestation of the system in the Incarnation and sacrifice of Christ. But in all that concerned



their instruction, their ritual and mode of worship, and their forms of obedience, they had to do directly with the Son as the official administrator of the system, visible in His personal manifestations, works, and words ; and with the Spirit sent invisibly to inspire His words into the minds of Prophets appointed to utter them vocally or in writing, and through those words as His instrument to enlighten, renew, and sanctify believers. Their faith in the things announced and foreshown, but then future—unequaled, unparalleled by the retrospective faith of modern times—demonstrates that they had an intelligent apprehension of the system. Well did David know, what he plainly declares, that the Spirit spake by him. Well did the prophets know that He spake by them—by every true prophet since the world began. Well did every believer know the Spirit as his inward illuminator, teacher, and sanctifier. The Hebrew word translated Spirit occurs in the ancient Scriptures some four-score times, as a personal designation of the Holy Spirit, as sent, as speaking by the mouth of the prophets, as being poured out, given to, dwelling in believers, etc., while under other designations, and in the effects properly to be ascribed to Him, He is continually referred to. And that His official presence and agency in the true worshippers was realized at every period, is implied in their recorded experience, in the expressions of individuals from the days of Abraham to the advent, and in those of Simeon and Anna at that period. In a word : The Old Testament Scriptures, together with the New, are as truly and comprehensively the work of the Spirit, as the material universe was the work of the Logos in the beginning.



They are the visible and abiding monument of His official agency in the execution of the mediatorial system, and in accordance with the eternal covenant. They stand related to all ranks of intelligent creatures; disclosing to the successive generations of men, and to principalities and powers in heavenly places, the manifold wisdom of God, in His infallible words, as "revealed unto His holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit." They are the medium of His indwelling presence and influence in the hearts of believers, and the indispensable instrument of His sanctifying energy. They are the public testimony and declaration to the world, and the dependent universe, of His Deity and Personality, of His coëquality with the Father and the Son, of His official works, and of the vastness, the permanence, and the ever-increasing results of His omniscient and ceaseless agency.

The Gospel, and the first two Epistles of John, written last of all the Scriptures, are devoted chiefly to the Revelation of the Father: especially the Gospel, Chap. 3-17. The first chapter of the Gospel, however, relates to the Son in His delegated character, *the Logos* as revealed, and as the Revealer and actor throughout the prior dispensations, and at His incarnation. In this official character He was in the beginning. All things were made by Him. In Him was life, he gave life to all creatures. He was the light, the source and giver of intellectual and spiritual light to men. He was, that is, from the beginning, in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. The light shone, but the darkness admitted it not. He came to His ancient chosen peo-

ple, but they, with some exceptions, received Him not. At length, He became incarnate, and manifested His personality, His peculiar office work, and His glory as proceeding from the Father.

In this retrospective and historical view, He is called the Logos, which is a primary designation of Him in His official relations as creator and upholder of all things, and as Revealer of the Father. The appropriation of this abstract term as a personal designation of the Revealer of God, is by some recent critics traced to the consideration that consciousness in an intelligent being—consciousness of existence, of affections, of thoughts, is realized in words—silently articulated or conceived; which when vocally expressed or written, reveal the thoughts which were primarily conceived in them. Hence the concrete Hebrew term *Dabar*, and the Chaldee term *Memra*, as used to represent the vocal articulation of the thoughts of which the Being was silently conscious. Such, so far as we know, is, undoubtedly, the law of mind, of intellectual consciousness and action. And since the thoughts of the Divine mind, so far as they are made known to us, may be truly conceived by us, and since the words in which they are made known, are the words in which we conceive and become conscious of them, it would seem to be as proper to suppose this to be a law of the Divine mind as to suppose that the audible vocal articulations of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, respectively, which are recorded in the Scriptures, truly convey to us the otherwise inscrutable thoughts of the Divine mind.

On this view, when we call the Scriptures the word

of God, we mean that the original words of Scripture are the written representation of the silent or the vocal articulations in which the thoughts which they express were consciously conceived and existed in the Divine mind. To convey those thoughts in those words appertained to the Logos in His prophetic office. If we have the thoughts, we have through His official agency the very words in which the thoughts originally inhered, and were committed to Him to be published to the world. In part He published them by His own vocal utterances; and in part by the agency of the Spirit on His behalf inspiring them into the minds of the sacred writers.

To say then with strictness and propriety, that the words of the original texts of Scripture are the words of God, is to say that they are in visible writing, the articulations in which as audibly uttered or silently conceived, the thoughts conveyed were originally realized in the Divine mind. In other words, that thoughts in the Divine mind are verbal in a manner corresponding to that of thoughts in the human mind; so that when vocally articulated or written, they remain as truly His as the thoughts which they express. All that we know of the thoughts as His, is expressed in the words as His, as the original, formal, and indispensable mode and vehicle of the thoughts; as in the case of man, he expresses his thoughts in words, and the words are as truly and in the same sense his as the thoughts are.

Hence when the Logos tells us that He came down from heaven, not to do His own will, not to speak His own words or as of Himself; but to do the will of the

Father who sent Him, to speak, as His Messenger, the words prescribed by Him, He must be understood to mean the very words in which the thoughts were prescribed and realized to His consciousness. And when the Spirit in His name, and on His behalf, was sent, under the same specific restrictions, to convey the prescribed thoughts to the sacred writers, the same adherence to the words in which they were prescribed, is rendered certain by the terms of His commission.

So far then as concerns the original texts, there is the same evidence that we have the very words of God, that there is that we have His thoughts. They are the words of God officially prescribed and given by Him to the Son as His Messenger. And as the Son primarily executed His prophetic office by vocally and audibly uttering the words given to Him, and thus manifested Himself to the world by His verbal utterances, He was designated by the abstract term which naturally and forcibly indicated His peculiar office and mission.

Consistently with this, and with the just authority of translations, we denominate our version of the original texts the word of God, on the ground of its being a true expression in English words of the thoughts expressed in the original text. That text furnished a perfect standard of the thoughts: so that a translator who perfectly conceived the thoughts in the words of that text, and perfectly conceived the same thoughts in the words of another language, might express them as perfectly as the original expressed them. To whatever extent he accomplished that, his version would be of like authority with the original, and as such would be,

with propriety, called the word of God, as expressing His mind and will with the same certainty as the original; and to whatever extent he failed of this, his version would lack authority.

On this view of the official character and relations of the respective persons of the Godhead, making their acts official acts, and regarding the Logos from the beginning as executing the external works of creation, providence, and grace, and His offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, the Old Testament becomes intelligibly harmonious with the New, and the Scriptures exhibit throughout a perfect unity of plan, and entire coherence and consistency in their details. They exhibit the mind and will of the Godhead, officially represented by the Father, and manifested by the personal agencies of the Son and the Spirit as His Messengers. Thus all that appertained to the work of the Logos is in harmony with His officially subordinate relations, whether before or after His incarnation. Being the recognized actor and revealer from the beginning, the mediator between the invisible Godhead — officially represented by the Father — and the human race, He prescribed their obedience and their worship; and after the apostasy of man, their worship by sacrifices, and their ritual of service. In the exercise of His sacerdotal office, He presided over that worship, and was as mediator, its immediate object. To Him, in this view, the altars of sacrifice were erected by the patriarchs; who at those consecrated places called on His name, and received verbal communications from Him. So during the period of the Tabernacle and that of the first Temple. The prayers of the worshippers uniformly,



like those of Abraham just prior to the destruction of Sodom, were addressed to Him as being the mediator personally present, by whom and through whom their worship was accepted. This usage was continued under the New Testament until the Levitical system was superseded, and the Father revealed as officially the ultimate object of spirital worship. Hitherto the worshippers had looked through their typical sacrifices to the Divine Mediating Logos, who interceded for them with the invisible God. But in anticipation of His personally visible withdrawment from them, and of a more full disclosure of the system, He more particularly taught them concerning the Father. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you. *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name:* ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father. At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father and came into the world," etc. (John 16: 23-28.) These passages and others relating to the same subject, seem clearly to teach, that previously the prayers of the true worshippers, offered through the mediative significance of typical rites, had been addressed to God only as manifested in the personal Logos; who in His Divine nature and His official acts, was Jehovah the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of



Jacob. They regarded Him as Jehovah their righteousness—God, their Saviour. Beyond Him, probably, no others than spiritual worshippers had any reference. For He Himself says: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." (John 17.) Subsequently, throughout the Epistles, the Father is often distinctively mentioned; and prayers, thanksgivings, and doxologies are addressed to Him.

The order in which the official relations of the persons of the Godhead were manifested and recorded in the Scriptures, is natural and congruous to man's apprehension. The actor and revealer in visible works and audible words, behooved first to make Himself known by His acts and the manifestation of His offices. By exhibiting the works of creation and Providence, by prescribing social and religious institutions, by verbal revelations and instructions, by piacular sacrifices, and by acting as civil Head and Ruler of His people; and at length by becoming incarnate, and fulfilling the predictions and typical representations of the past, He incidentally declared and prepared the way for that distinctive and ample declaration of the Father, which is recorded in the Gospel. In His revelations and instructions from the beginning, the official personal agency of the Spirit was exerted, invisibly, in communicating His words to the prophets and sacred writers; through which delegated agency,

by their instrumentality, He uttered the sacred oracles in writing. That the relations of the respective persons were, in a proper sense, *official*, is evident from the representation that the Son was subordinate to the Father, and the Spirit to the Father and the Son; whereas, apart from those relations, they were coëqual and one in essence. Nor is this view a novelty. Augustine—as quoted by Calvin—treating of this subject, says: “These distinctive appellations denote their reciprocal relations to each other. . . . The Father, considered in Himself, is called God; but with relation to the Son, He is called the Father. . . . Christ considered in Himself, is called God; but with relation to the Father, He is called the Son.”

I perceive no foundation for the distinction which some make, between the Logos, in respect to His subordination, relations, or offices, and the Christ, the God-man, the Theanthropos. The Logos was in the beginning—*all things were made by Him*. The Logos became incarnate and dwelt with men—the God-man—the Christ. As predicted yet to come, “clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, His name is called the Logos of God.” (Rev. 19.) In Colossians 1, He is distinguished from the Father as “His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood;” and “by Him,” under that designation, “*were all things created*, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the Head of the body the Church.” Here all the works, relations, and

offices, which are elsewhere ascribed to the Logos and the Christ, are ascribed to the Son. The same things, which in one place, whether in the Old or the New Testament, are ascribed to Him under one relative or official title, are under other titles ascribed to Him in other places. In very numerous instances different titles, which represent the same Person in His subordinate relations, occur interchangeably; and those which are used with special reference to the one or to the other nature in the complex Person, are used interchangeably with those which specially refer to the complex Person. The Person is the same, whether contemplated as the Logos before or after the human nature was united to that Person. He was the Jehovah, the Messenger, the Anointed, under the Old Testament, in the same sense, the same subordinate relations, the same offices, as He is the Lord, the one sent, the Christ, under the New Testament. He appeared in the Shekina, in the tabernacle and temple, and to Isaiah and Ezekiel, and also on the holy mount, to Saul on his way to Damascus, and to John in the isle of Patmos. His works, manifestations, acts, under the Old, are recognized as His in the New; and those under the New are prefigured and predicted in the Old Testament. In all alike He is the same delegated Person. In the apocalypse He is styled the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, Jesus Christ, the Lord, the Son of God, the Lamb of God, the Word of God. As such, the redeemed and the angels of heaven worship Him. All that we know concerning Him, we know of Him in the official, delegated, subordinate relations and agencies which He sustains, and by which

He is rendered cognizable and conceivable by us. I apprehend that all that He did and does—as Creator, Ruler, Revealer, Redeemer—is in *one* relation to the Father—that of official subordination, (See Hebrews Chap. 1, and Eph. 3)—while, distinguished as the Second Person of the Trinity, He is the coëqual of the Father. But whether this view be adopted by every one, or not, can make no difference in respect to the Prophetic office of the Divine Revealer. For in that office no one can doubt but that He was subordinate to the Father: as a Messenger—one sent—is in the nature of the case, subordinate to Him by whom He is sent.

What I contend for is that the original Hebrew and Greek texts were given by inspiration of God, as they were written. On no other ground can I conceive them to be infallible, or entitled to be called the word of God; as they are according to their own declarations. With questions and difficulties, alleged to exist in the present state of these texts, I meddle not. Whatever they may be, and I apprehend them to be far less real and important than is commonly imagined, they are, I conceive, fully as hard to be surmounted on any other view of the subject, as on that of original Verbal Inspiration: that is, if the Bible is, in respect to its contents, to be considered as any thing more than a mere human composition. If they are the word of God, uttered by the Spirit through the sacred penmen, then to ascribe to man's agency any thing of their matter or manner, can be neither more scriptural, nor more rational, than to account for the Divine act of creation, by ascribing the matter of the globe, and its original forms, to chemical affinities and gravitation.

The difficulties, whatever they may be, actually exist. They have arisen since the texts were originally written. Suppose that the words first written were given to the writers by Inspiration, and were therefore infallible, and perfect for all the purposes intended; and that these difficulties of various readings, omissions, redundancies, and the like, are due to the writers of the manuscript copies now extant. Then we have to a very large, though indefinite extent, the original infallible words. To that extent they are the very words of God, and are an authoritative and perfect standard, by which to test the various readings and discrepancies. Now, since these variations in different copies are, by common consent, admitted not to affect any important fact or doctrine, or if they do in any instance, such fact or doctrine is elsewhere and repeatedly expressed in the earliest, most perfect and most reliable copies, the correction of them only requires a comparison with that which is adopted as the standard. This settles the matter, obviates the difficulty, and leaves the text in its unimpaired authority. To whatever extent this may be accomplished, you have the infallible standard, the original words, intact.

But suppose the original text, and that of the oldest copies, to have consisted of the selected and fallible words of man, like the words substituted, or interpolated by the copyists, then, though you may have an approximately original, you have at best but a fallible text, by which to correct variations. The process of correction by such a text could not possibly be easier or more certain, than by a fixed and infallible standard.

It is on the ground of the official relations and words



of the Holy Spirit, that His personality, and that sins against Him personally, are specified in Scripture. In His relations to men, He is personally the immediate author, teacher, giver, of all their knowledge, intellectual and spiritual, of the holiness and perfection of the Divine Being, through His inspired words and by His indwelling, enlightening, purifying influence. In the execution of His office He stands between the Son as Redeemer, and those whom He redeems: and by His own energy through the Word of God as His instrument, brings them into union with Him. They individually, and as a community of believers—the church—“are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.” That foundation is, indubitably, the Word of God, written by the apostles and prophets as it was given to them—inbreathed, inspired by the Spirit. It is therefore the infallible and only basis of that faith by which believers are united to Christ and made partakers of the redemption purchased by Him. The Spirit is as the Inspirer, the immediate author of that Word. It is written, that it may be His instrument lodged in the understandings and hearts of men. To resist and reject that word is to resist Him, and reject His regenerating and sanctifying influence. He who rejects His words, rejects the only instrument by which He exerts His power and influence on the minds and hearts of men. To persist in rejecting His words, is to preclude the possibility of renovation and sanctification; and is a sin against Him personally. As illustrations of this, I may cite a Scripture or two with reference to the church of the ancient dispensation. Stephen, Acts 7, referring to the history of the He-

brews and Israelites from the call of Abraham to the day of his own arrest and martyrdom, says, to their representatives, the Sanhedrim or council, before whom he was called to defend himself: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always *resist the Holy Ghost*: as you fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers; who have received the law by the instrumentality of Messengers and have not kept it;" which plainly imports, that they rejected the words of the Holy Spirit uttered by the prophets as messengers of God. And Isaiah, chap. 63, with the same retrospective reference, says: "They rebelled and vexed the Holy Spirit."

The official work of the Holy Spirit in conveying the words of God to men, whether, as in the earliest ages, only to be uttered vocally by them, or at later periods to be uttered vocally and in writing, is the foundation, the condition precedent to His official work of sanctification. As His instruments they must be received, understood, lodged in their minds, prior to His exerting that work. For He works in, through, by, them, and not otherwise. Hence the absolute necessity of their being published, preached, and to a greater or less extent, received, understood, realized to the consciousness of every individual in whom He works a change of heart, enlightens, teaches, purifies, and preserves through faith unto salvation. They may be more or less received and understood, as hitherto to a great extent they have been, by men in whom He does

not execute His official work; but He executes that work in none who have not some intellectual knowledge and conviction of them. And were the conviction indubitably fixed in the minds of all who read or hear the words of Scripture, that they are "in truth the words of God," a far more extended execution of His work might be confidently expected. This, in the future, will undoubtedly be realized. The seed, which is the Word of God, will, as in the apostolic age, be sown unmixed with tares, and will be made to germinate by the energy of the Spirit. They shall be all taught of God. The Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh. Then will the official work of the almighty, omniscient, omnipresent Spirit, as regenerator and conservator of the Church, through the instrumentality of the words inspired by Him, be fully manifested and acknowledged, to the glory of the Father and of Christ. Then shall the head stone of the spiritual temple be exalted with shoutings of Grace, grace!—not by man's power, "but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." "Faith," says Calvin, book 3d, "has a perpetual relation to *the word*, and can no more be separated from it, than the rays from the sun, whence they proceed. Therefore God proclaims by Isaiah, *Hear and your souls shall live*. And that the *word* is the fountain of faith, is evident from this language of John: *These are written that ye might believe*. . . . The *word* itself, however it may be conveyed to us, is like a mirror, in which faith may behold God." The nature, universality, and permanency of the work of the Spirit in the Church, manifest the relation of His official agency to the progress and consummation of that scheme of grace, of which the world itself was created to be the scene.

If the Holy Spirit actually revealed any thing, made any original communications to the prophets or apostles, as He is, time and again, asserted to have done, I ask the abettors of a multifarious influence assisting them in the exercise of their natural faculties, how, by what means, in what way He disclosed and conveyed to them such new thoughts, doctrines, prophecies? Would any stimulating assistance to their memories, imaginations, and understandings suffice in such a case, and raise them, as some affect to conceive, to such a pitch of *spiritual intuition* as to enable them to discover the deep things of God? No, say others, this was *revelation*, as if that word was sufficiently unintelligible and mysterious to cover up the matter. But others, who define the inspiration of the Scriptures to be an influence of assistance to men's faculties, stultify themselves by excepting all that the sacred writers did not know before—whole books, whole chapters, paragraphs, sentences, clauses, single words—as being inspired by that “higher and more genuine inspiration” which the Scriptures themselves teach, and which Paul expressly defines. But if the Scriptures assert that genuine inspiration of any part of the Scriptures, they assert it of the whole and every part of them, without exception. The terms which they employ, and the very nature of that genuine inspiration, forbid the supposition of any exception in any canonical book.

On the view that the Logos in the beginning, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, and the Incarnate Word of the New, signified one and the same Divine Mediatorial Person, the Revealer of God, exercising

at every period of the sacred narrative, His prophetic office, the peculiar and progressive disclosures of the Scriptures as written and published from time to time, are in harmony with His concurrent and His ultimate objects, and suited to their accomplishment. As an effect of the apostasy, and of the deceitful lures and influences of the god of this world, the hearts of men were alienated, their understandings darkened, their minds blinded to all spiritual truths. No mere manifestation of the Divine perfections in the works of creation and Providence, nor any such exhibitions of truths concerning the Divine existence and perfections, as constitute what is called natural religion, would suffice to restrain the corruptions of the fallen race, and to prevent the universal reign of idolatry and wickedness; as is shown by the history of all the nations, to whom such manifestations only have been made. Personal Manifestations of the Revealer Himself in the relations in which He was cognizable and conceivable by men, were requisite; and would have been requisite indeed had there been no apostasy, and were therefore made in Eden, prior to the fall. The Infinite, Divine Being—whether as a Unity or as a Trinity—unconditioned by cognizable relations to created intelligences, would have been incognizable and inconceivable to them. The Logos, assuming such relations, manifested Himself in them to the observation, intelligence, and faith of men and angels, in His works of creation, Providence and grace under various aspects and successive dispensations; and especially in His redemptive work, as Mediatorial Prophet, Priest and King, the Personal Image, and Revealer of the Invisible Divinity.



But these personal relations and manifestations were rendered cognizable by men, not so much by His external and visible acts, as by His vocal utterances of words explanatory of His acts, prerogatives, counsels, and purposes, and of their relations, obligations and duties. On the exercise of His prophetic office, therefore, the disclosure and progress of the system depended from the beginning; and from the necessity of His verbal disclosures being in perfect harmony with the manifestations of His invisible acts, we may with certainty infer the importance of every word uttered by Him, and in His name by His messengers—nay, the absolute necessity that His thoughts should be uttered by them in His own words.

The original doctrine of Satan, which he proposed to Eve, was pantheistic; Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. Cain and his followers adhered to this teaching; notwithstanding the manifestations of Divine omnipotence, wisdom, and forecast in the visible works of creation. The negation of that blinding and destructive heresy, by the assertion of infallible truth in the words of the Logos, as Creator of matter and of all things out of nothing, is expressed in the very first sentence of recorded Scripture; where, from the nature of the subject, and the object of the declaration, we are bound to believe that the words employed are the very words of God. But in reality there is the same reason why all the other words of Scripture are the very words of God. The antagonism of Satan did not cease; nor was it during the ages of idolatry and rebellion on the part of the chosen people, or at the assault in the wilderness on the second Adam, rebuked and repelled by any other than the very words of God.

## VIII. THE THEORY OF GUIDANCE, AND OF A DISTINCTION BETWEEN REVELATION AND INSPIRATION.

It is among the remarkable things connected with the history of this subject, that men of the most eminent character for learning, and personally as Christian men, who believe the words of Scripture throughout, to be the infallible words of God, and whose faith and hope repose on them as such, do nevertheless perceive no difference—in respect to their being His words—between their having been selected by the sacred writers *under the guidance of the Spirit*, and the very words themselves having been *imparted to the writers by the Spirit*—imparted in a manner equivalent to an audible vocal articulation. Were such men required to answer the question, whether, if selected by the writers without the supposed guidance, the words of the sacred text, however true, appropriate, and answerable to the thoughts, could with any semblance of propriety be called the words of God, they would, no doubt, at once, and decidedly, answer in the negative. And on the other hand, if asked, whether the very words being conveyed by the Spirit to the minds of the sacred writers, would not determine them to be literally the words of God, they would as readily and decidedly answer, Yes. What then is really effected by the alleged guidance? Suppose a sacred writer to know with perfect accuracy, a fact which he was to narrate, and to know it in the very words which truly represented it. Would a supernatural guidance be

necessary in that case to determine him to choose the very words which he already knew as truly and accurately representing the fact, and a deviation from which would to his intelligent consciousness, misrepresent it? Suppose it to be a fact of consciousness, and that he perfectly understood the words in which he was conscious of it. Surely in such a case it can not be said that he was supernaturally guided to choose the words of which he was already conscious. The utmost that could be pretended in such a case, would be that he was restrained from choosing words contrary to his knowledge, and his consciousness, and thereby falling into error. But cases of this sort constitute a large part of what is written in Scripture, of which the writers had previous knowledge; with reference to all which cases it is obvious that the writers having previously, and perhaps for years, been conscious of the right words, could not, when they came to write them as Holy Scripture, select them by a supernatural guidance; nor could such guidance add any thing to the words to render them more true or infallible than they were before and without the supposed guidance.

It being an admitted and undeniable fact, that the words recorded by the sacred writers, were, to a large extent—as in immediate revelations, predictions, etc.—conveyed to the writers by the Holy Spirit, the alleged guidance is asserted only of those historical or other facts of experience and observation which were previously within the knowledge of the writers. Now assuming this statement to embrace all the cases in which an infallible guidance is supposed, I think it

safe to say that the assertion of it is unscriptural, unnecessary, inconceivable, and impossible.

1. The assertion of an infallible guidance of the sacred writers in the selection of words to express historical or other facts, appears to me to be unscriptural, in the sense of not being taught in Scripture, and of being contrary to what is taught. I do not find any such doctrine taught in the Bible; nor have I met with any writer on the subject who adduces any evidence, by quotations or criticisms, to show that it is taught in the Bible. It is propounded by Dr. Whitby, and nearly every writer since, as an hypothesis, a *theory* devised to obviate certain objections and difficulties of matter and style. It is called a theory of Inspiration, but only by imposing on the word inspiration a sense different from, and contrary to the sense which that word bears in Scripture; as different from, and contrary to that sense, as an act which conveys thoughts from one mind to another is different from and contrary to an act or influence which terminates on the exercise of the mind in thinking.

2. The supposed guidance of the sacred writers is wholly unnecessary and superfluous. There is nothing in the nature of the case to demand it. The effect required is fully provided for by the Scripture doctrine of Inspiration, which teaches that what the sacred penmen wrote was conveyed to their minds by the in-breathing act of the Holy Spirit. It teaches this comprehensively of all that they wrote in their official capacity. Most, and probably all writers upon the subject, admit and hold that this Scriptural inspiration obtained in respect to revelations and whatever was

not previously known to the writers. The Scriptures assert it indiscriminately of all that they wrote. It surely is as competent to the whole as to any part, and it can not be pretended that there is any more difficulty in conceiving that, out of all the things previously known to a prophet, certain particular ones, when in the discharge of his office he sat down to write, should, by the inspiring act of the Spirit, be specially and vividly, and *exclusively* realized to his consciousness, to be then and there uttered by him in writing, than there is in conceiving that original and immediate revelations should be so realized to his consciousness. Another and different kind of supernatural agency in the case is therefore unnecessary. Such an inspiration is as perfect a ground of infallibility, in respect to the one portion of what is written, as in respect to the other portion; and if the supposed guidance was necessary to render the one portion infallible, then the portion which was inspired without guidance, would lack the necessary ground of infallibility.

3. The supposed guidance appears to me to be inconceivable and impossible. For it implies that the sacred writers were, in the intelligent exercise of their faculties, guided to select words whereby to express thoughts of which they were not conscious, which is inconceivable and impossible. For if, prior to the guidance, they were conscious of the thoughts, they were conscious of them in words. They could not be conscious of them apart from words, as I have before abundantly shown, and as a little reflection must convince every man who thinks. And if it be said that the words of which they were conscious were not the



best, the most correct and proper, whereby to express the thoughts, and that perfect and infallible truth required that all of them, or some of them, should be exchanged for other words, then I submit that it is inconceivable and impossible that the alleged guidance should enable them to select such other words. For in the nature of the case the words of which they were conscious expressed the thoughts to their intelligent consciousness, and if a change of the words for others was necessary, a change of the thoughts also was equally necessary. For if the new words did not actually modify or change the thoughts, then new words could not be requisite. But they could not be conscious of the new or modified thoughts, till they were conscious of them in words, and therefore they could not be guided intelligently to select words whereby to express them. Inevitably the new or modified thoughts must be conveyed to their minds in words by inspiration, in order to their becoming conscious of them. They, by the exercise of their faculties, guided or not guided, could no more conceive the new thoughts, or select words whereby to express them, than they could conceive the thoughts contained in a prediction, and select words whereby to express them.

But says the theorist: All those things in Scripture which the writers did not previously know—all the thoughts of which they were not previously conscious—were communicated to them by revelation; and he assumes that they were or might be communicated apart from and independently of words, so that the sacred writer having the thoughts, partly by revelation, and partly by his own experience and observa-

tion, might select the words whereby to express them, and being infallibly guided in his selection by the Spirit, might select words free from error, and infallibly true. His theory is contrary alike to our consciousness, and to the teachings of Scripture. It is moreover absurd and ridiculous until he demonstrates: 1. That men are conscious of thoughts apart from words, and may receive revelations from the infinite intelligence otherwise than in words; and 2d, that such supernatural guiding influence was actually exerted on the intellectual faculties of the sacred writers. The first he never can demonstrate, and without that, the second would be unnecessary and futile.

If it be said that Divine power might enable men to select words whereby to express thoughts of which they were not conscious: then 1. Such an exercise of Divine power would not be an act of *guidance*, but an act of creation; and 2, it would not be consistent with the free and intelligent exercise of men's faculties, but contrary to such exercise, and in itself and its effects merely mechanical. Either, therefore, the thoughts and words were in their due arrangement conveyed to the sacred writers by inspiration, or they uttered in writing their own thoughts and words without any supernatural assistance of any kind.

The proposition that men were *guided* in making a selection of words to express thoughts which they were already conscious of in words which expressed them as perfectly as they conceived them, is in every respect absurd. For either it assumes that they selected the very same words—which would be no selection; or that they selected words which did not

express the thoughts in conformity to their consciousness, and therefore which did not express the same thoughts. To say that they selected other thoughts, and also selected words to express such other and different thoughts, is quite another proposition, but no less absurd; for they could not be conscious of the other thoughts apart from the words in which they conceived them.

I therefore object to that distinction between Revelation and Inspiration, which makes Revelation the communication of truth, and Inspiration the *guidance* of the Holy Spirit, by which its subject is rendered infallible in the communication of truth. 1. I find no such distinction expressed or implied in the Scriptures themselves. I know of no Scripture which teaches that some portions of the Bible in distinction from others, or that the whole of it, was communicated to the writers otherwise than by Inspiration. The Scriptures themselves declare that they are all given by Inspiration of God. Paul says of the things which were communicated to him, and which he preached and wrote, that "God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." Various Scriptures assert that the Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of prophets and by David. Quotations from the Old Testament assert that the Holy Ghost spake the passages quoted: as Heb. 3 : 7, and Acts 1 : 16.

2. The words translated Inspiration both in the Old and New Testaments, mean the same as the phrase, *breathed into*. To say that what the sacred penmen wrote was given to them by *Inspiration* of God, is precisely equivalent to saying that the words which they

uttered in writing were breathed into their minds, or conveyed into their minds, by the Holy Spirit. Now, since it was absolutely necessary that the words of original Revelations should be communicated to the sacred penmen, and since the revelations are declared to have been communicated to them by Inspiration, it is unscriptural and superfluous to make a distinction, as though Revelations were communicated in some other way than by Inspiration.

3. The Scriptures every where teach that what the sacred penmen uttered in writing was spoken by the Spirit. It was what He said. The words are His words as being spoken to them by Him, and uttered by Him through their instrumentality. He spoke His own words by their mouths; uttered His own words by the instrumentality of their pens.

4. This distinction assumes that Inspiration conveys nothing whatever of thoughts or words to the sacred penmen. It assigns to the word Inspiration a wholly different sense, namely, that of *guiding* them in their act of communicating truth to the world. It is made to signify a guiding influence on the faculties of the men, making them infallible in their act in announcing, uttering, communicating truth. It is an inspiration of the men, not a conveyance of truth to them. It assumes that they had already in their minds, by some other means than inspiration, the truths which they were to communicate; and that all they further needed was a guidance in the selection and utterance of words. That supposed and necessary guidance is made to take the place of, and to signify all that is signified by inspiration; and on this ground Revelation is distin-

guished from Inspiration; as though the Scriptures taught us nothing, and it was of no importance to us to know any thing, as to how, in what manner, by what agency revelations were communicated to the sacred writers.

5. No evidence whatever is adduced to justify calling guidance inspiration. No evidence, I apprehend, can possibly be adduced from the Scriptures themselves. It is at best a mere theory, founded on what is supposed to be necessary in the case — necessary to make the Scriptures infallible. It being assumed that the sacred writers selected the words which they wrote, and that as men they were liable to err, it is alleged that they were infallibly guided in the exercise of their faculties in making the selection, and infallibly preserved from error in writing. But it is not proved or even attempted to be proved that they selected the words. On the contrary it is expressly asserted that the Scriptures, that is, the words as written, were *given* by inspiration of God. The thoughts are not Scripture apart from the words. If the thoughts were given, the words must have been given with them. Moreover, with reference to large portions of Scripture, it is allowed by all that the words must have been communicated to the writers. But if they were communicated from the Divine to the human mind, it must have been either, first by articulate audible utterances, or second, by silent conveyance of them to the minds of the recipients by the Almighty and Omniscient Spirit; and since they certainly were not all spoken audibly, it follows that the rest must have been conveyed by the act of the Spirit.



But says the objector, Why not admit this distinction between Revelation and Inspiration? Why not adopt the hypothesis that inspiration means a *guidance* of the writers? If they were infallibly guided in their choice of words, why is not that as good a ground of infallibility, as a conveyance to them of the very words of God? What semblance of difference is there? I answer, that this theory of *guidance* is mere hypothesis, not shown to have any foundation in fact, not shown to be necessary, not taught in Scripture. Whereas, the Scriptures teach that the very words of God were given, and therefore were infallible as being His. If the words were given by inspiration, then the writers, guided or not guided, did not select them. One of these views is true and the other not. They can not both be true. One is asserted in Scripture. The other is a speculative theory. That which is asserted in Scripture presents incontestable proof of the infallibility of the words. The hypothesis, not being itself established upon any evidence, can afford no proof or ground of infallibility. It is therefore to be rejected. It leaves it as an open question, whether or not the writers were infallibly guided in selecting the words? It affects to determine the ground on which the Scriptures are to be received as the infallible word of God, not on the testimony of Scripture, but on a theory of man's device. And if one may safely do this under the notion of an inspiration of *infallible* guidance, another—since there is not a word in Scripture concerning infallible guidance—may as safely do it, under the notion of an inspiration of *Direction*, that is, “such assistance as left the writers to describe

things in their own way, directing only the mind in the exercise of its powers;" another, under the notion of an inspiration of *Elevation*, "which added a greater strength and vigor to the efforts of the mind, than the writers could otherwise have attained;" another under the notion of an inspiration of *superintendency*, "which preserved generally from any thing being put down derogatory to the revelation with which it was connected." The Scriptures say nothing and know nothing of either of these kinds of inspiration. They are mere fancies of men; and the difference between them and the Scripture doctrine of inspiration, is the difference between Scripture and hypothesis, truth and falsehood, what God says and what man says. I can conceive of an enlightened and good man, who firmly believes in the infallibility of the Scriptures as the word of God; but who, in his feelings and meditations, has so long and familiarly associated that belief with the idea of a Divine guidance of the sacred writers, in the selection of the words which they wrote, that the idea seems to him to be scriptural, or consistent with Scripture; and, as his faith is firm, he can not see, nor easily be made to see, that such guidance is not as good a ground of faith in the words, being the real and infallible words of God, as would be the utterance of the same words by Him, audibly or by inspiration, into the minds of the writers, and through their instrumentality to the world. His theory of guidance seems to him to come to the same result as the doctrine of immediate verbal inspiration; and the result alone appears to him to be of any importance in the case.

But submit to the same man a parallel case where the infallible words of Scripture, as the very words of God, are the sole ground of his faith, and he will instantly start back. Take the doctrine of Justification by faith, and suppose him, in view of the express verbal statements of Scripture, to believe justification to be "an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone." Now suppose a friend should say, I believe in justification as firmly as you, and in the same result, namely, salvation. But I understand by justification, not an act of God, pardoning us, and imputing to us the righteousness of Christ; but I understand by that word, a work wrought in us and making us righteous — sanctification — in which our own agency is concerned, and to which, indeed, primarily, our active agency is indispensable: as the active agency of the sacred writers in the selection of the words which they wrote was, in the order of time, indispensable before they were guided in the selection. They could not be guided before they acted. We can not be said to be justified till we are personally righteous and holy, which we are not till we are sanctified. Would he not instantly and earnestly reply: You mistake the matter. You have an erroneous and baseless theory. Sanctification is not justification. You deceive yourself by giving it that name. Justification is as different from sanctification as a Divine act of creation is from a human act of obedience. It is purely a Divine act, in which no agency of man is exerted. It is expressly taught to be such in the words of Scripture.

Whereas, your theory on the subject is neither taught nor implied in Scripture. It is a theory invented by man to exalt and flatter himself and his acts in the affair of salvation. But, rejoins the other, why object to my view? It comes to the same thing. If we are sanctified we shall be saved, and that is the end desired. Can there be any better ground of assurance that we shall be saved, than that of our being sanctified? What difference is there between the two views? Answer: the one view is according to the teachings of the word of God: the other is contrary to those teachings derogatory to the Scriptures, and as a theory, hypothetical and absurd.

The Greek word translated *guide* occurs five times in one form, and five times in another form in the New Testament. Matt. 15:14: If the blind *lead* the blind—They be blind *leaders* of the blind. Matt. 23:16, and 24: Woe unto you, ye blind *guides*. . . . Ye blind *guides* which strain at a gnat. Luke 6:39: Can the blind *lead* the blind? Acts 1:16: which was *guide* to them that took Jesus. Rev. 7:17: and shall *lead* them unto living fountains of waters. Rom. 2:19: art a *guide* of the blind. Acts 8:31: except some man should *guide* me. And John 16:13: He will *guide* you into all *the* truth.

The passages which relate to blind *guides*, and the blind *leading* the blind, relate, no doubt, to *guiding* by verbal instruction. The same is true of Acts 8:31. The Eunuch was reading the Prophet Isaiah. Philip said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should *guide* me; that is, teach me, explain to me. "Of whom speak-

eth the Prophet this, of himself, or of some other man?" He understood well enough the words that he was reading, but they did not indicate to him who it was that should be led as a lamb to the slaughter. As to that, he needed a further disclosure; namely, the verbal instruction which Philip was sent to give him. "The *Spirit* said unto Philip, Go near and join thyself to this chariot." (Verse 29.)

There are some remarkable personal references in this narrative from verse 26 to verse 40, which throw light on our view of the prophetic office. Verse 26: "And the *angel of the Lord* spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south," etc. This is the Old Testament designation of Jehovah as the Messenger of the Father — the Messenger of the Covenant, (Mal. 3,) the Messenger (angel) Jehovah, who appeared to the Patriarchs, and to Moses, spoke familiarly to him, gave the law at Sinai, and was head of the theocratic dispensation. The rationalistic commentaries, which, when the angel, or an angel is said to speak to a man, resolve the statement into an inward impression or impulse which is felt by the subject, but is not produced by any external personal agent; and when the Spirit is said to speak, as in verse 29, deem the statement to mean nothing more than an inward suggestion or intuition, are unworthy of even the lowest degree of human wisdom. If these views may be adopted in the present and other cases in the New Testament, they may be adopted in respect to all that Moses and the prophets have written, and all pretense of supernatural acts and events recorded in the Bible may at once be given up.



The plain import of this passage is, that the Messenger Jehovah in the exercise of His prophetic office, as in earlier periods, spoke to Philip, and directed him to go, in his official character, to a certain place, for a special service. He obeyed this verbal direction; and being about to exercise his office as preacher, that is, to utter such words as the Spirit inspired into his mind, put into his mouth, for immediate utterance, he, like others of his time who spoke, officially, only what the Spirit supplied to them and spoke by them, was thus committed to the official direction and control of the Spirit. "Then the Spirit said unto Philip, go near, and join thyself to this chariot," (v. 29.) The Eunuch asked him to explain as to what person it was to whom the Prophet referred. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus," (v. 25.) Having accomplished the specific service on which he was sent, "The Spirit of the Lord," the Holy Spirit as sent by Christ the Messenger of the Father, "caught away Philip" . . . who "was found at Azotus : and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cesarea." (Verses 39-40.)

The only other passage in which the word *guide* occurs, as specified above, is John 16 : 13 : "He will *guide* you into all the truth." The whole passage, and the parallel passages, most evidently restrict what the Spirit was promised and commissioned to do to verbal teaching, communicating truth verbally to the apostles. Thus : "I have yet many things *to say* unto you, but ye can not bear them now. Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will *guide* you into all the truth ; for *He shall not speak* of Himself ; but whatso-

ever He shall hear, that *shall He speak*; and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John 16: 13-15.) The whole of this clearly relates to communications to be made in words, as by speaking. The import of the passage may be expressed as follows: Christ, in His office of Prophet, had yet many things to say to His disciples. But the time had not arrived for Him to say them, and would not arrive till after His ascension; so that He could not directly exercise His office by uttering them. But He would send the Spirit as His Messenger to speak them in His name, and to glorify Him by receiving and uttering only what He gave Him to communicate to them. Thus He would *guide* them into all the truth by *speaking*, verbally teaching, them all the truth; as Philip *guided* the eunuch by his verbal explanations. With this view the parallel passages agree: "The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall *teach you* all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever *I have said unto you*." (14: 26.) "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall *testify* of me," (15: 26.) To *teach* is to communicate knowledge verbally. To recall what has been said, is to recall words which had been uttered. To *testify* is to utter verbal testimony.

To pretend that the word *guide* in the passage above quoted, means an influence of the Spirit on the understandings, memories, or other faculties of the sacred writers, which did not teach and communicate to them

the very words they were to write, but only directed, guided them in the exercise of their faculties in the selection of words and communicating them by writing, is to pervert the very words of Christ, and in derogation of the office of the Spirit. The *selection* of the words which He was to teach and utter was not delegated even to Christ, or by Him to the Spirit. The Spirit was not commissioned or authorized to speak of Himself, that is, words selected by Himself, but only the words which He received from Him by whom He was sent. To imagine that the penmen of Scripture had any personal agency in the selection of the words, is to exalt them above the Spirit, and above Christ, to an official equality with the Father. And as to the idea of a guidance of the apostles in their *selection of words*, there is not a hint of that specialty in the passage under consideration. If there is any guidance referred to different from direct verbal instruction, it is a guidance into all the truth, abstractly and apart from words. If the theorizer says the guidance relates both to the truth and the words, he says what the text does not say.

The Saviour, providing for the execution of His prophetic office, through the official agency of the Spirit, and through the subordinate official agency of the apostles, says in His address to the Father, John 17: "And now I come to Thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Thy word. . . . Sanctify them through thy truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world." The official relation of the apostles to

Christ, as delegated by Him to utter His words as they should be communicated to them by the Spirit, was probably as well understood by them and by the Church in their times, as any fact relating to Christianity. It was not necessary to repeat or to reäffirm it. All that was necessary was to assert, and occasionally to give miraculous evidence that they were apostles. But during the first age, Christ Himself in the exercise of His prophetic office through subordinate human agents, was not confined exclusively to the apostles; as under the Old Testament He was not confined to those prophets who were sacred writers. And as this consideration strikingly corroborates the foregoing view concerning His prophetic office, I shall refer to some instances.

“And in those days came *prophets* from Jerusalem unto Antioch,” where Paul then was. “And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout the world; which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar.” (Acts 11 : 28.) At a later period, when Paul was at Cesarea, the same prophet came there. “And he took Paul’s girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.” (Acts 21 : 11.) On this it may be observed : that in the exercise of his office the utterance of Agabus is expressly said to be the utterance of the Holy Ghost. The expression, “Thus saith the Holy Ghost,” is equivalent to “Thus saith the Lord,” in the Old Testament. Through this man as His instrument, the

Spirit spoke certain words, he concurrently, and freely exercising his vocal organs, in articulating the words.

There were in the Church at Antioch certain prophets and teachers, among whom were Barnabas and Saul. "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them."

Paul, on his way from Miletus to Jerusalem, landed at Tyre. "And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days; who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem." (Acts 21:4.) In cases like this, it would seem that the words uttered by the Spirit were audible to all the persons present; whether uttered through the instrumentality of the vocal organs of men or not. The plain inference from such cases, is, that Christ exercised His prophetic office either by audible utterances of the Spirit as His immediate Messenger, or by the agency of the Spirit through men as His instruments; and that in particular cases, the Spirit, instead of speaking directly to the apostles, or to them through their own vocal organs, spoke audibly to them in common with others, or through the instrumentality of others. In either case, and in all cases, in which the Spirit is said to *speak*, the articulation and utterance of words is signified, and it is no less certain that He spoke only the words of Christ which He was sent to utter.

The main difficulty with many of the excellent men who have adopted, under the name of Inspiration, a supposed influence exerted in different degrees on the minds of the sacred writers, is that of conceiving why those things which were previously within the know-



ledge of the writers, should need to be inspired into their minds—realized to their consciousness, specially by a divine act, when they were called to write them as parts of Holy Scripture. It seems to them, that all that could be necessary in such a case, was, that what they so wrote should be *true*, without mixture of error. And since such portions of the sacred writings are, in conjunction with the rest, called the Word of God, they conceive that a Divine influence must have been exerted on the faculties, preserving them from error, and as some believe, guiding them in the choice of thoughts and words. This inference, from the nature and necessity of the case, is strengthened, in their view, by the fact that the individuality of the writers, their respective peculiarities of style and manner, are manifest in what they wrote; which is regarded as clearly implying that they wrote purely of their own free will, in their own natural way, as knowing it already and being conscious of its truth.

Now let it be observed, 1st. That since the Scriptures largely consist of the kind of matter referred to, and since it is intimately intermingled with original revelations, prophecies, doctrines, and facts previously unknown, we must undoubtedly conclude that the Divine Author of the original Revelations, saw fit, required, determined, that the historical and personal narratives and other things referred to as previously known, should be inserted in the writings which were to be received as His word, and the rule of faith and life. 2d. That the matter so required and inserted, shows to what extent, and in what manner, the Divine Law-giver, and Author of the original Revelations, saw it

to be necessary—to the instruction of mankind, and the perfect administration of His government, and the accomplishment of His purposes of mercy and justice—to connect the revelations, doctrines, precepts, etc., which He gave and enjoined, with the agency and experience of contemporary individuals, families, and nations, and with human nature in like particulars and like circumstances, in all subsequent time. 3d. That this object made it absolutely necessary that the history and experience of the parties referred to, their acts, their thoughts, feelings, purposes, desires, hopes, joys, griefs, should be expressed in the very words which they employed to express them, which perfectly conveyed their meaning, and with which both they and the sacred writers were perfectly familiar in the style which they respectively employed. No other words or style could possibly have expressed exactly and perfectly the facts and expressions referred to, at the different times, and by the penmen who at those times wrote successive portions of the Scriptures. 4th. That this being granted, it is apparent why the Divine Author—having determined what should be included in the Scriptures, and that they should all be uttered on His authority as His infallible word—should specifically inspire into the minds of the writers, the very words which they and their immediate contemporaries would employ and did employ to narrate the same personal, social, and other facts of their experience. And because the writers and their readers understood the words and style which were in common use to express all personal and social facts, relations, and beliefs—all that they previously knew—it was

absolutely necessary to their understandings, that the supernatural revelations should be communicated in the same familiar words and styles: and accordingly they were so revealed, and are so expressed, in words in common use, and in styles, phrases, idioms, as peculiar to the respective writers, as are the narrative and historical parts of Scripture.

Here then is an intelligible and an ample reason why both the historical parts of Scripture, and the supernatural revelations, should be expressly inspired into the minds of the writers in the words and styles in common use; and if all the contents of the Scriptures were predetermined to be included in them by Him who seeth the end from the beginning, that they might all be equally of His authority, His word, the rule of faith and life, then any objection either to the words and styles employed, or to their having been inspired into the minds of the sacred penmen, expressly to be written as they are, is wholly without sense or reason. If there could be any valid objection to the conveyance by inspiration of the historical parts of Scripture, on account of their being written in the familiar words and styles of man, the same objection would be equally valid against the conveyance in that way of the supernatural facts and doctrines. There they are, the supernatural and the natural, inseparably commingled together, each being essential to the intelligibility of the other, and both expressed in similar words and styles. The portions previously known to the writers, stand in a relation to the supernatural portions, which their being true and free from error, fulfills only in part. They are true and free from error; but in the

place which they occupy they are more than that. The Divine Wisdom predetermined that they should be there written in the words and styles in which they were true to the apprehension and understanding of the writers and readers, and that they should be there as part of the Holy Scriptures, as His Word, written on His infallible authority.

Now in view of the facts of the case—that the Scriptures, promiscuously, are written in the familiar words and styles of the writers; that they are, nevertheless, collectively, the word of God; that they expressly affirm of themselves, that they were given by inspiration of God, written in the words which the Holy Ghost spake by the prophets, and taught the apostles; and that they are, as written, of infallible, Divine authority—it is plain that the objectors' mode of accounting for the results, is wholly inadequate, as well as unscriptural and unnecessary. At best, the supposed influence on the faculties of the writers, were such an influence admitted, could do no more than preserve the writers from error, which is far short of what the case required. It would be merely a negative or restraining influence. It would not invest the truths recorded with Divine authority, and make them infallible, the word of God, in distinction from all other *truths* of human history and experience, which are not written as parts of the Holy Scriptures. And if the objector goes further, and imagines that the supposed influence on the faculties of the writers, selected out of all that were previously known to them, the particular *truths* which they were to write, and the very words and styles which they were to employ, then it

may be observed: 1. That the supposed influence on their faculties, superintending, elevating, or guiding their exercise of them, could not produce those results. It would require a wholly different influence, an influence which, instead of affecting their exercise of their own faculties, conveyed new intelligence, new thoughts and words, to them—intelligence as to which of all the truths known to them, they should write, and which they should omit—intelligence therefore which they could not have possessed before, and could not have discovered or infallibly deduced, by any exercise of their faculties—and intelligence as to which of all the words in their vocabulary they should select to express infallibly the particular truths they were to record; a point which, equally with the selection of the particular truths, omniscience only could infallibly determine. 2d. If this supposed influence conveyed such new intelligence, new thoughts and words, unknown to the sacred writers before, and undiscoverable by them, then it was not what is pretended, an influence restraining or directing the exercise of the human faculties, but *theopneustos*, the inbreathing, inspiring act of God, conveying the requisite intelligence, the particular truths, the particular thoughts, the particular words which they were to write, as His Word, the Holy Scriptures, the infallible rule of faith and life.

It is clear, then, that he who admits that a Divine influence was necessary to preserve the sacred writers from error, must admit that no conceivable influence on their faculties, superintending or guiding their exercise, could accomplish what the case required; and that an influence which conveyed into their minds the



very thoughts and words they were to write, was indispensable; which is Inspiration, in the sense of Scripture.

In what respect it can be any easier to conceive why a Divine influence of *guidance* should be necessary, in the case of things previously known to the writers, than to conceive why those things should be immediately inspired into their minds, is by no means apparent; nor is it apparent how an influence could be exerted, which preserved from error, but left the matter, the words, and the styles, just as they are, natural and peculiar to the writers. The difficulty and objection relate, however, in fact, to the words and styles themselves, as they actually exist in the Scriptures, and not in any degree to the question whether the writers previously knew the things which they wrote, or to the reasons why they wrote in their accustomed words and styles.

To one who has a clear conviction that the Bible is God's Book, wherein He has made an infallible and permanent declaration of Himself, of His acts, of His relations, of His purposes, for all the future ages and dispensations, and so manifested Himself as to be conceivable and cognizable to man and to all finite intelligences, the pretended distinction between revelation and inspiration must appear to be preposterous and absurd. For who does not know that this wondrous *catena* of communications is delivered in the simple and homogeneous form of *narrative and history*; wherein superhuman truths, and facts of human experience, are as intimately associated, commingled, and merged together, as if there were no distinction between them.

They are in fact inseparable, and involve each other. The narrative assumes and is the vehicle of the doctrines ; and but for that could never have existed. To suppose that one part of the matter of successive chapters, paragraphs, verses, was communicated to the sacred writers by one operation of Divine agency, and the other part by another operation ; or that the one portion was communicated to them disconnected from the other, and that the other portion was supplied by them, or was received in a way to have the slightest dependence on their agency, either in attaining it, or in combining the two portions in one homogeneous composition, is as preposterous as it would be to suppose of a history of Greece or Rome, that all the details of it which related and owed their coloring and influence to the system of government and of idolatry, and to the character and acts of the civil, military, and priestly functionaries, were written by one man, and that the other details relating to the private lives, and social customs of the people, and mixed up in every sentence with the former, were written separately by another man : or to suppose that all the words required to express both of these kinds of details, were written separately on slips of paper, and so shaken up together as to adjust themselves in the regular and finished composition. Nay, this is but a faint illustration of the preposterousness and absurdity of the notion referred to. For in such history of Greece or Rome all the details are merely human, finite, and within the observation and comprehension of a historian. Whereas, in the Bible, a large portion of the details are superhuman, not within man's observation or previous

knowledge, and required to be adjusted consistently, harmoniously, perfectly, in composition, with the facts and details of human experience, and temporal, social, and civil affairs of individuals, families, and nations. To assign this task of composition in any the remotest degree to human agency and skill, is to assign to such agency what no conceivable miracle could bring about, namely, plenary knowledge or omniscience.

The Bible is one Book. It has one object: the revelation of God and the salvation of man. To this its details converge and its history relates. On the one hand its Divine Author manifests Himself Personally, visibly, historically; acting, speaking, determining. On the other, as the details and issues have to do with man, his character, relations, and agencies, his sentiments, affections, and emotions, are mixed up, as warp and woof, with the superhuman events, doctrines, predictions, precepts, promises, exhortations, and comminations; mixed up just so far, and in such proportions from time to time, as Infinite Wisdom saw fit. In its relation to man, it is not a general history of different nations, nor a secular history of the one peculiar people, except as they were in immediate relation with the covenant people, the redeemed Church of God, His family, His household, His liege subjects, His witnesses, the subjects of His immediate discipline, and the depositories of His written word, for their own instruction and rule of faith and life, and ultimately for all kindreds and peoples who shall be reclaimed and brought under the bond of His covenant. The scope, design, and tendency of it therefore, as a whole, and in all its details, are moral and spiritual. The in-

fluence of every sentiment, and every word of it, is fraught with moral and spiritual bearings and issues on the minds and hearts, and in the lives and doctrines of men. From beginning to end, its Author and Revealer is the same, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last; and He is finally to judge, and to acquit or condemn each individual, according to the words which He has caused to be written.

To suppose such a book, involving in every part, not only the wisdom and goodness, but the holiness, righteousness, justice, and truth of God, to have depended in any tittle of its contents or its composition, on the will, the understanding, the imagination, or the memory of man, is to misconceive, or to forget, its Author, its nature, and its object.

If there are in Germany, or elsewhere, hyper-transcendentalists, or idealistic intuitionists, who can conceive of poetry apart from poetical language and imagery; of prediction apart from prescience—the future by spiritual retrospection; of history independently of past events; of revelations without a revealer; of thoughts without words, they must be left to enjoy their delirious hallucination in their own peculiar way. But men who believe concerning God, that He fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass; and that the Scriptures are, in matter and form, in contents and composition, in thoughts and words, idiom and style, just what He willed them to be, as the rule of His administration, and the only rule of faith and life to man, can not intelligently believe that one part of them, any more than all the other parts, were communicated to the sacred writers or attained by them, otherwise than

in the very words and sentences prearranged and composed, as they were written in the original texts.

What our condition, as rational and as fallen creatures, requires for us, is a standard of truth, a fixed, infallible criterion. Such a standard must be out of and independent of ourselves, and preëxistent to our wants. Such a standard is the word of God, as given in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. Not a part of those Scriptures: not one part to one man, and another part of them to other men; but the whole of them, according to their verbal significance, purport, and design, for every man, the word of God, and therefore the infallible rule of faith and life. If human reason, speculation, theory, may sit in judgment on the question, may select some of those writings as the word of God, and may reject others as of human authorship, knowledge, will, or discretion, then they are no standard in the sense, and to the effect that our exigencies, and our immortal hopes and destiny demand. They are but a nose of wax for each theorist to wrest conformably to the devices and desires of his own heart. All that we can possibly know of any doctrine, precept, promise, instruction, we know by the words in which it is expressed in the texts of Scripture. If the words were given by Inspiration of God, then they constitute an infallible standard of faith and life. If they were not so given, and all of them, their infallibility can not be maintained.



IX. THE RELATIVE AND FINITE ONLY CONCEIVABLE  
BY THE HUMAN MIND—SIR WILLIAM HAMIL-  
TON'S DOCTRINE OF THE CONDITIONED—RELATIVE,  
LIMITED.

One of the most striking facts which is exhibited in the history of the human race, is that of the absence from the minds of whole nations, from age to age, of any just apprehensions of the Supreme Being; any notions or beliefs transcending those which they entertain of creatures; and which they express in the language and the rites of idolatry. A parallel fact, no less conspicuous in history, is that no portion of the individuals of the race, or of any particular nation, has ever attained just notions and beliefs concerning God, and His works, otherwise than from His own infallible words. From these facts it is obvious to infer that there is an inherent difficulty in the case, which nothing but the words of God can supersede. This difficulty may, in some respects, be aggravated by the moral depravity and blindness of men as fallen creatures; but it exists primarily in the chasm between the infinite and the finite. The Infinite Being, unconditioned by relations, acts, and expressions, within the observation and conscious apprehension of men, is to them, because they are creatures, utterly inconceivable. To suppose the contrary would be to suppose man to be the equal of his Creator, and to have the same knowledge and the same consciousness. The Logos, therefore, manifested such relations, acts, and verbal expressions in Eden, before man fell; manifested His

Personality and His attributes in such relations, and under such limitations, as to be conceivable and knowable by man with his limited capacity of thought. It is in those relations, as described in the words of God, that we apprehend Him. Beyond that, His words which assert His mode of self-existence, His infinite perfections, His eternal counsels and purposes, reveal Him not to our intellectual comprehension, but to our faith only.

Hence the absolute necessity and absolute importance of the words of God, in correlation with all His personal and visible manifestations and works; and of their being as truly His words uttered by Him, as that the attributes and works which they describe should be truly His. And accordingly the progress of His written word coincided with that of the manifestation of His relations in His works of providence and grace. The Logos in the beginning, and from time to time, appearing visibly, signaling His presence by His acts, speaking audibly, and accompanying His words by exertions of His power in the production of visible effects, manifested His Personality and His Divine attributes in such a manner as to be cognizable to man: but to all intelligent and correct apprehensions and constructions, His words were as essential as His works. Without them, Adam and the patriarchs would have been as far from rightly construing His works as manifesting His Divine nature, attributes, and relations, as the pagan nations have ever been. This necessity of words, as explanatory of external existences and relations, and as the medium and vehicle of thought — of the conception, reception, conscious-

ness, and memory of thought — is common to all created minds, inasmuch as in all the capacity of thought is limited. This necessity is the same to angels and to men ; and therefore, the joint manifestation in works and words — commenced at the dawn of man's existence, and continued through successive dispensations — would seem to have been as really for the instruction of the one as of the other class of minds. What relation this may have had to the apostasy of Satan and his confederates, may be further removed from our comprehension than its relation to the fall of man. But the relation to the knowledge and the agencies of the holy angels, of this joint manifestation of works and words, might easily be traced in all that is revealed to us, concerning their ministries towards the heirs of salvation, and towards the sacred writers, and jointly with the triumphant Church in the doxologies and praises of heaven ; and concerning their agencies towards the Logos, both before and after His incarnation. From these disclosures it is at least reasonable to infer that they attained their knowledge of His personality, His attributes and relations, His offices, delegated agency, works, and words, in the same way, and by the same manifestations, as man. So far, at least, as is known to us, no similar manifestations have been exhibited elsewhere than upon this earth ; and without them neither angels nor men could attain any true notions or beliefs concerning the Logos, or concerning the invisible, the infinite, the incomprehensible Deity.

I may confirm these views by a reference to the writings of the late Sir William Hamilton, the most able, the most scriptural, and most reliable and de-

monstrative of those who have endeavored to elucidate the operations and the limitations of the human mind. I quote from his chapter on the Philosophy of the *Conditioned*. His nomenclature can hardly be familiar to most readers; and if, by necessarily omitting many qualifying or explanatory clauses I somewhat impair the fullness of his meaning, I hope nevertheless, in general, to exhibit it correctly.

He means by the *conditioned*, existencies, or objects, which have, and are contemplated as having relations to other existencies or objects, and, as limited thereby, being conceivable and cognizable by the limited capacity of man. On the other hand, by the *unconditioned* is meant that which in its nature is *infinite*, and without limitation in *space*, *time*, or *degree*; and his doctrine, as being that of the consciousness of all men, is, that the conditioned and limited, but not the unconditioned, is cognizable and conceivable by the finite mind of man.

"The mind can conceive, and consequently can know only the *limited* and the *conditionally limited*. The unconditionally unlimited, or the *Infinite*, the unconditionally limited, or the *Absolute*, can not positively be construed to the mind; they can be conceived only by a thinking away from, or abstraction of, those very conditions under which thought itself is realized; consequently the notion of the unconditioned is only negative—negative of the conceivable itself. . . . The result is the same, whether we apply the process to limitations in *space*, in *time*, or in *degree*. . . . The *infinite* and the *absolute* are equally inconceivable to us. . . . As the conditioned [related, limited] is the only

possible object of knowledge and of positive thought—thought necessarily supposes conditions. To *think* is to *condition*, and conditional limitation is the fundamental law of the possibility of thought. . . . The mind can not transcend that sphere of limitation, within and through which exclusively the possibility of thought is realized. Thought is only of the conditioned; because, as we have said, to think is simply to condition. The *absolute* is conceived merely by a negation of conceivability; and all that we know, is only known as ‘won from the void and formless *infinite*.’ How indeed it could ever be doubted that thought is only of the conditioned, may well be deemed a matter of the profoundest admiration. Thought can not transcend consciousness; consciousness is only possible under the antithesis of a subject and object of thought, known only in correlation, and mutually limiting each other; while, independently of this, all that we know, either of subject or object, either of mind or matter, is only a knowledge in each of the particular, of the plural, of the different, of the modified, of the phenomenal. . . . We can never, in our highest generalizations, rise above the finite; our knowledge, whether of mind or matter, can be nothing more than a knowledge of the relative manifestations of an existence, which in itself it is our highest wisdom to recognize as beyond the reach of philosophy. . . . We are thus taught the salutary lesson, that the capacity of thought is not to be constituted into the measure of existence, and are warned from recognizing the domain of our knowledge as necessarily coëxtensive with the horizon of our faith. And by a wonderful revelation, we are



thus, in the very consciousness of our inability to conceive aught above the relative and finite, inspired with a belief in the existence of something unconditioned beyond the sphere of all comprehensible reality."

Here then we have in the constitution, the limited capacity of thought, and the universal consciousness of man, a clue to the reason why both the thoughts and words of Scripture were given by the Creator Himself; and why they were given at such times, under such circumstances, in such connections with external works and events, in such connections with human history, experience, agency, and discipline, and in language and idiom adapted to man's capacity. Thought is conceivable only of the finite, the limited. Thought can not transcend consciousness. We are conscious of thought only in words. But the Scriptures have to do with man's relations to what is above his capacity, the invisible, the spiritual, the infinite. "The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe, concerning God, and what *duties He requires* of him;" in respect to neither of which has he, in himself, the slightest degree of competency; nor, with respect to either, can he be instructed or have any conscious knowledge, without the instrumentality of words. But every sentence of Scripture—in itself, its connection with other sentences, or its necessary implications of doctrines, duties, moral relations, or spiritual affections—implies a knowledge on the part of its Author, of which man is wholly incapable, an all-comprehensive knowledge of existencies not limited, and of all the relations, connections, bearings, influences of things spiritual and eternal, Divine and human.

Now all the manifestations of the Logos were conditioned, that is, relative and finite, and therefore cognizable and conceivable as objects of thought in correlation with the words which He uttered in announcing and describing them. The superhuman, so limited, was thus brought within the sphere of finite apprehension, while His words concerning the unconditioned—the Infinite, the Absolute—are intelligible and sufficient as a basis and guide of our faith; just as in respect to our faith in the existence of matter. The relative manifestations of the particular qualities of matter, are within our capacity of thought and knowledge, in correlation with the words in which we think them. The qualities only are manifested—but as manifested, they irresistibly infer a correlate as their basis—that of which they are qualities, conditions, limitations, which we call matter, and in which we have as firm a faith as we have in the qualities, but of which in itself we know nothing.

From the very commencement of His delegated work, the titles and acts of the Divine Revealer are significant of relations and limitations within our capacity of knowledge: His titles; as the Son of God, The Word, the Image, the Messenger, the Anointed, the Mediator, the Prophet, Priest, King, Redeemer, Saviour: His acts; of speaking, commanding, forbidding, prescribing, predicting, promising; of seeing, hearing, appearing visibly, controlling and producing visible effects on physical natures, not to specify others involving superhuman knowledge and power, or to particularize those in which, as after His literal incarnation, the exercise of His hands, feet, eyes, and other

human organs, is asserted of Him. It was in these manifestations that He was conceivable, cognizable, knowable, by men and angels, as Divine, as delegated, as one Person in two distinct natures, as Prophet, Priest, and King—Revealer of God in works and words—the conditioned propounding the unconditioned to our faith. For the correlate of a *Son* is a *Father*; of a *word*, the *thought* expressed by it; of an *image*, an *original*; of a *Messenger*, an official *Superior*. So the correlate of Divinity manifested under such conditions and limitations, is the Divine nature infinite, unconditioned. A knowledge of the conditioned, necessitates a spontaneous faith in the unconditioned.

I hence observe—

1st. That all the manifestations of the Logos were prescribed, I may say, necessarily prescribed; since, in acts and words, they are the basis and prerequisite condition, of our faith in the unconditioned, the infinite nature and attributes of the Divine Being. They could not possibly owe their existence to any finite intelligence.

2d. That the words of Scripture, which directly or indirectly, all relate to those manifestations, were included in what was prescribed; since they are, as much as the acts, the basis, and prerequisite condition of our faith.

3d. That in the Scriptures, however, there is no ground of discrimination, no line drawn between what relates to the conditioned, relative, limited, and the verbal statements which evolve and connect with the former our faith in the unconditioned.

4th. If, therefore, the Scriptures are the rule of our

faith in the Person, the acts and the words of the Logos; in what He has revealed concerning the Personal relations, offices, and acts of the three Persons of the Godhead; and in what we believe concerning the infinity and eternity of the Divine Being, which are incognizable and inconceivable to our finite capacity, it is as incredible, nay, as impossible, that any word of Scripture, written and published on the authority of God, should in any sense have originated with man, or depended on his knowledge or his will, as it is that he should be the originator and author of the rule of his own faith, and that of angelic or other created intelligences.

5. This conclusion derives point and emphasis from the consideration, that the words which constitute the historical parts of Scripture, and which alone can by any one be supposed to have been supplied by man, were at least, in general, uttered in immediate connection with the manifestation of Divine acts to which they relate, and which they describe—as in the narrative of the plagues of Egypt and the entire record of the Exodus, the sojourn in the wilderness, the conquest of Canaan, the story of the Judges and of the Kings of Israel and Judah, the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles. He, therefore, who selected the words must have comprehended the acts with infallible accuracy, their conditions, relations, limitations, designs, tendencies, and possible influences and issues; since the words define and describe the acts, in their due connection with Divine and human agencies, and with spiritual and secular results.

The mind can not conceive, and therefore can not

know the Infinite; and for the reason that infinity is unconditioned—not relative, not limited. The entire category of divine manifestations therefore, consists of finite particulars, addressed to the limited capacity—the observation, the wisdom, the hearing, the understanding of man, so as to be cognizable and conceivable by him. But the Scriptures which record those manifestations, and the words of Scripture which assert the infinity in nature and attributes of the Divine Being, are the original and only real ground of faith. He who believes the Scriptures in both these relations, believes in the infinity of the Divine Being and Perfections, and in the distinction of Persons in the Godhead, their official relations, the delegated mission of the Son and of the Spirit, and the entire series of manifestations ascribed to them. Of these, the manifestations in words are no less exclusively theirs than those exhibited in acts; and no tittle of the words, any more than of the acts, can be ascribed to man. Towards the unconditioned—the Infinite One, he simply exercises faith. Of the respective Persons as revealed and manifested in their relations, acts, and words, he has both knowledge and faith. They are revealed in such acts and relations as to be cognizable and conceivable to him—acts and relations which do not transcend his capacity of thought and knowledge—acts of reciprocal intelligence—relations of mutual sympathy and fellowship. His fellowship is with the Father, and with the Son, through the indwelling influence of the Spirit. The love of God the Father, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, are realized to him. He knows God as He has



revealed Himself. He worships the Father through the mediating Son, by the aids of the Spirit. But in all this, and in all his acts of worship and obedience, the Word of God recorded in the Scriptures is, exclusively, his rule of faith and life; and to it, as such, he has in himself the witness of the Spirit by whose inspiration it was given to the sacred penmen.

Of this doctrine of the *conditioned*, I may observe: 1. That it is wholly incontrovertible by argument. He who attempts to controvert it, must of necessity begin by assuming that there is no difference or distinction between the infinite and the finite; and must argue that to conceive and know the finite is the same as to conceive and know the infinite. This is the essence of *pantheism*; but it is mere assumption, fancy, delusion, unsupported by reason, and contrary to universal consciousness. 2. That this doctrine is the uniform deliverance of every man's consciousness, in harmony with all the facts of his experience and observation, and with every thing, doctrinal and historical, that is recorded in the Scriptures. To say that man is not God, but a creature; not infinite, but finite; is to say that his capacity of thought, of understanding, of knowledge, is finite, limited; and that he is by the constitution and condition of his being as incapable of conceiving, comprehending, knowing, the infinite, as the infinite transcends and exceeds the finite. 3. This doctrine, so palpably prerequisite, presupposed, and essential, to any true knowledge of God or of ourselves—any true knowledge of what is revealed and enjoined in the Scriptures, or true faith in what is asserted of the unrevealed, the infinite, the uncondition-

ed—any true knowledge of ourselves as rational and accountable creatures ; of our relations to one another, to the past, and to the future ; of our relations to God and to the system of faith and obedience which He has prescribed in His Word, rests ultimately on the constitution which God has given us as creatures, and is testified by our consciousness in harmony with the Scriptures. We can no more evade, suppress, or rid ourselves of it than we can divest ourselves of our intellectual and moral nature ; and being in perfect harmony with the Scriptures and with all our experience, its authority is unquestionable and irresistible.

Now I conceive that the doctrine which I have endeavored to establish in a former volume—that by our constitution as intellectual and rational beings, we think in words, and can not exercise our capacity of thought otherwise than by silent or vocal articulations, which represent and realize our thoughts to our own consciousness as perfectly as we conceive them ; that we receive the thoughts of other minds only in their spoken or written words, and in signs equivalent to vocal articulations ; and that we are conscious of, remember, and express our thoughts only in words and equivalent signs ; and, therefore, that the thoughts of the Divine mind conveyed to the sacred writers by inspiration, were necessarily conveyed in words, in order to their being consciously received and realized to the understanding and consciousness of the recipients, consistently with their constitution and with the natural exercise of their faculties—is in some respects, at least, analogous to the foregoing doctrine of the *conditioned*, and like that, as being in harmony with Scrip-

ture, and resting ultimately on the constitution and consciousness of man, is of like authority ; and I therefore urge it as being essential to any right knowledge of the nature, extent, and effect of Divine Inspiration, and of the authority and infallibility of the Holy Scriptures. If, as the consciousness of all men testifies, we think, receive thoughts from others, and are conscious of thoughts only in words, then, to teach that any thoughts of the Divine mind were communicated to the sacred writers without and independently of words, is to teach that man may know and be conscious of those thoughts independently of words, and contrary to, and independently of, his constitution and the natural exercise of his faculties, which is to make him more than man, more than limited, more than finite. If that was of the nature of Inspiration, then such things in Scripture as were previously known to the writers, must be excluded from it ; for they must have been conscious of those things in words. But if all Scripture was given by Inspiration of God, and if it was of the nature of Inspiration to convey both thoughts and words, then it would be as rational to impute that which constitutes a Scripture miracle to the human messenger whose instrumentality was employed in the manifestation of it, as to impute any word written and published as the word of God, to the human messenger whose mouth or pen was employed in uttering it.

It is therefore on the basis of what the Scriptures expressly teach concerning their Inspiration, and of the facts respecting man's constitution and experience—that thought is possible only of the conditioned, the

limited, the finite; that thought can not transcend consciousness, and that man can receive and be conscious of thoughts only in words—that I rest the doctrine of the plenary verbal Inspiration of the original texts of Holy Scripture.

#### X. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF PLENARY VERBAL INSPIRATION.

All that we know or conceive of the Divine Being, of His mode of existence, and of His attributes, is derived from the words of Scripture. Those words, therefore, must be His words; for otherwise than by receiving them from Him, the sacred writers could not conceive the thoughts which they express.

All that we know of His ways of manifesting Himself to creatures, and all that we know of spiritual existences and the invisible world, is taught in those words, which therefore must be His.

All that we know or can know, of His objects, purposes, and ends, in the works of creation and Providence, is contained in those words, which are therefore His words.

All that we know of His method of redeeming, pardoning, sanctifying, and saving men, is taught in those words, and therefore they are His.

All that we know of His physical and moral government of the world, is taught in those words; and all that we know of man's relations to Him, of man's apostasy, his obligations, his moral and religious duties, his rule of faith and life, his resurrection, his fu-

ture existence, and his destiny, is communicated in those words.

But under these heads all the words of Scripture are comprised, either by their direct reference, by necessary implication, or by their moral and historical connections and relations. And in the relations in which they are used they are so connected and involved with superhuman, invisible, and spiritual existences and realities, which are wholly beyond the limited capacity of man to discover or comprehend, as to preclude the supposition that he had any agency whatever in the selection of them, and to enforce the conclusion that they are, from first to last, the words of God, selected and prescribed by His omniscient wisdom. They accordingly comprise all that He has seen fit to have recorded for the permanent instruction of the Church and the world, all the verbal revelations which He has made concerning Himself, all that man is to believe concerning Him, and the duties He requires of man, the only and infallible rule of faith and life.

We thus have a glimpse of their importance in the economy and administration of the Creator and Ruler of the world; of their connection with the knowledge, faith, obedience, and salvation of men; and of the necessity of their being communicated to all the individuals of the race, and of their enduring forever as the criterion, and in vindication of all the issues of the system. The place which they occupy in the economy of providence and grace, in the manifestations of righteousness, in the administration and the issues of moral government, bespeaks their transcendent importance to the glory of God, and all that relates to man



in time and in eternity. And hence it is apparent, why He who projected and who administers this wondrous system, caused *His own words* to be recorded and published as His authoritative and infallible proclamation to the world—to men and angels—and why His official messengers, in the execution of this work, were restricted to the utterance of the words which He prescribed.

In view of what the Scriptures declare, we have faith in the being and attributes of the Infinite One, as existing in a threefold personality in one essence and will, prior to all external works. And since the fact is revealed in Scripture, we can conceive that, with reference to an external universe to be brought into existence, the three coëqual Persons entered into a mutual covenant concerning all the details of such universe; and with reference to the actual execution of the works of creation, providence, and grace, assumed relations towards each other, and towards every particular of those works. But as those relations with creatures involved a condescension of the Infinite to the conditions and limitations of the finite, it is manifest why a subordination of the personal executors and administrators of the system—that is, of the Son to the Father, and of the Spirit to the Father and the Son—was requisite.

To bring the Infinite within the conditions and limitations of the finite, so as to be conceivable and knowable by the finite capacity of man, was, so to speak, the problem to be solved. Hence, those characteristics of the system which are most within the apprehension and observation of intelligent creatures,

the countless variety, animate and inanimate, vast and minute, in the works of creation; the tokens of infinite intelligence, wisdom and goodness in the peculiarities and relations of all the diversified forms of life, and the modes of material existence; the types of form, order and dependence in different classes of the animal and vegetable creation; the phenomena of light and vision, of sound and hearing, of sensation and consciousness. - And hence also, the peculiarities and relations of men as a bodied race of creatures; and the provision in that form for a personal incarnation of the Infinite in immediate relation with the finite, in sympathy and fellowship with man as a creature, with his limited capacity of thought, with his mode of conceiving, being conscious of, and expressing thoughts in words.

The Second Person of the Trinity assuming His subordinate relations as Legate and Revealer, the Logos in the beginning, in whom was life, and all power for the execution of His works, created the heavens and the earth as the scene, and all creatures as subjects and instruments of His manifestations. But in none of the particulars of those manifestations, is there any thing more indispensable to their being rightly construed and understood, or more important therefore to the effectual accomplishment of their object, than the words of their author, which He, as perfectly comprehending His own works in all their relations and issues, caused to be recorded. That He should have needed assistance, or should have employed the agency or instrumentality of man, in the selection of those words—man, who was as incapable of knowing

the thoughts to be expressed before the words were imparted to him, as of performing the works to which they relate—is as incredible as that both the works and words were merely human. Without the words, we are without the means of knowing what has been manifested and enjoined; and unless they are the words of God, they can not be an infallible rule to us.

The Holy Scriptures, though recorded as they were given by inspiration at successive periods, constitute one book, and comprise all that their Divine Author saw fit to communicate to be written in His name, for the permanent use of the Church and the world. But it by no means follows that the portions written prior to the days of David, or to those of Malachi, comprise all the truths or doctrines which had been previously revealed, and had entered into the faith and life of the Church; or that any of the doctrines of faith which were recorded by the successive writers, were then first revealed when they committed them to writing. There had been an untold amount of oral instruction, by which the Spirit had enlightened, sanctified, and guided patriarchs, individual believers—the Church, from age to age, prior to the time of Moses. That instruction being extant and operative in the faith of the Church, and being exhibited and acted out in the ritual of worship, the discipline of families, the practical duties of religion, and the rules of life, was assumed as being already known to those to whom the sacred writings were from time to time communicated.

Thus the Church was instructed and preserved during twenty-five hundred years prior to the age of Moses; instructed in all those revealed truths, ordi-

nances, institutions, and rules of faith and life, which concerned acceptable worship, holy obedience, and the way of justification and salvation, through the mediation, atonement, and righteousness of the One Redeemer. "The Faith once delivered to the Saints," was faith in those communications. "The Divine Mediator having, from the foundation of the world, undertaken the care and salvation of the Church, He it was who immediately dealt with it in what concerned its instruction and edification." (Owen on Heb. 1 : 1.)

But it must be borne in mind that both in the oral and written instructions of the Great Revealer, much more was to be accomplished than merely to inculcate those doctrines of faith and rules of obedience which immediately relate to the salvation of men. The prophetic office was as closely connected with that of moral and providential Ruler of the world, as with that of Priest and that of King of the redeemed people. He who in the exercise of His prophetic office imparted the instructions, is He by whom all things in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, were created, who upholds and governs all, and is head over all. In the exercise of His unlimited prerogatives in His physical, moral, and spiritual administrations, the *infinite* was constantly to be inculcated under the conditions and relations of the *finite*. Of the invisible, the spiritual, the supernatural, the eternal, no conception or notion whatever could otherwise have been imparted, nor any ground have been furnished for faith in them, or any words supplied expressive of them. But these instructions behooved to be consistent in all respects, with all the perfections, purposes,

prerogatives, and agencies, of the Administrator and Revealer, throughout the realms of the dependent universe; and to be such as, in the progress and the final issues of the entire scheme, will appear to all finite intelligencies to be consistent: such, therefore, as will eternally vindicate the ways of God to man. The perfect rectitude, wisdom, and goodness of the moral and the providential government of God; the perfect consistency of His foreknowledge and ordination, with the freedom of man's will, and all the mysteries of nature and grace, time and eternity, will at length be cleared up, or at least so far as to render their consistency manifest.

On this view we may, perhaps, discern some of the reasons why the sacred writings are characterized by such diversified and minute details concerning finite objects and agencies, and why they have in general a historical form, in which those details could be exhibited, and made to blend and harmonize, on the one hand with the *superhuman*, and on the other with the free will, free agency, dependence, and accountability of *man*. And in like manner we may perceive how, during the primitive and the patriarchal dispensations, when the *natural* was also officially the *religious* head of the household, clan, and tribe, a knowledge of all the doctrines of faith, and rules of worship and obedience, might, without a written revelation, be effectually inculcated and preserved, by successive theophanies, and direct personal teachings, of the Divine Revealer, and by frequent interpositions of retributive justice and miraculous power, as in the punishment of Cain, the deluge, the confusion of tongues, and the destruction of Sodom.



The entire period from the creation to the Legation of Moses, or rather, perhaps, to the death of Jacob, was pervaded by theophanic manifestations and direct oral instructions. A new dispensation was then introduced ; in which to the like manifestations, direct personal teachings, and miraculous interpositions, was added a *Theocratic* headship and government over the children of Israel. Under this system, a retrospective history of the earlier period, together with new and renewed revelations, enactments, and instructions, was committed to writing. This system, modified from time to time in some particulars, attained its height under the reigns of David and Solomon. Its decline, occasioned by the idolatry and corruption of the tribes, gave occasion to the ministry of the prophets, to exhibitions of fallen human nature in new aspects, and to new and varied instructions and manifestations. Throughout the whole of this history, as in the prior oral instructions, the contrast and correlation of Divine and human agencies are exemplified. At the destruction of the first temple the theocratic administration ceased. With the incarnation the system of instruction and manifestation was resumed, or rather the system as begun in Eden was begun anew, under new conditions of visibility. The Logos, who in the beginning manifested His Divine nature and His official prerogatives in the creation of all things, now appeared as God manifest in flesh ; taking man's nature into union with His person, for the perfect fulfillment of His offices in all His relations as Prophet, Priest, and King. God manifest in flesh ! The Infinite under the conditions and relations of the finite ! "The Logos was made

flesh," says the Evangelist, "and dwelt among us ; and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." In the exercise of His prophetic office He based His announcements and instructions on "the Scriptures" — His words, recorded in the Old Testament. His official acts and His personal teachings are recorded in the Gospels. In the other books of the New Testament are contained His teachings by the inspiring agency of the Spirit through the instrumentality of men. During His personal ministry He manifested His Deity in union with His humanity by the miraculous exercise of His own power, by His acts of omniscience, by rising from the dead, by visibly ascending to heaven ; and both by His immediate and His mediate teachings and acts, His citations of Scripture, and His fulfillment of types and predictions, He demonstrated His personal identity with the Jehovah of the ancient dispensations. And finally, in the "Revelation which God gave unto Him to show unto His servants," He declares Himself the Alpha and Omega of the entire system, the beginning and the end, the First and the Last, the Root and the Offspring of David ; announces the *future* concerning the Church and the world ; and closes the canon of Scripture by an emphatic and awful warning against adding to, or taking aught from His words. In short, as He was officially, in all external manifestations and instructions, the Revealer of God, and as His manifestations and instructions are made known to us only by means of His written words, it follows that in their relation to us, His words are at least of equal importance with His works.

A Divine revelation, teaching what man is to believe concerning God, and what duties He requires of man, must, on the one hand, truly represent man according to the constitution which God has given him; and on the other, must exhibit such representations of God, as man, in conformity with the laws of his mind, would be able to apprehend, and by analogy, ascribe to the author of his constitution. As man's nature and faculties are finite, his capacities of knowledge, of thought, and of consciousness, are limited. The Infinite, therefore, must be represented by such forms of finite expression, in works and words, as he can apprehend, sufficiently to educe and regulate his faith. Such expressions will, from the nature of the subject, indicate existence and realities indefinitely beyond what they distinctly disclose. They will enable him to see "as through a glass darkly," and to believe both in what he sees, and in what that indicates and necessarily implies. The reality of his apprehension and of his belief, will be infallibly ascertained to him by his own consciousness.

Now, the mind, in the act of thinking, conditions that of which it thinks—as for example, in respect to *time*, as being present, past, or future; as to degree, as being, relatively, in some respect more or less; and so, as to all the attributes, qualities, modes, and relations of that which is the subject of thought. This process is realized to our consciousness in the *words* in which we think. Apart from the words, we have no consciousness of the thoughts. It is therefore absurd to suppose the mind to select—whether with or without guidance—words whereby to express thoughts of

which it was already conscious in words. To suppose it to select *other* words, is to suppose it to have *other* thoughts differing from the former as much as the newly-selected words differ from the former words. If thoughts are conveyed to the mind, by written characters, by vocal utterances, or by Inspiration, they, to be consciously received, must be conveyed in words. To suppose the recipient to select the words, is to suppose that the thoughts were not conveyed to his consciousness; but that both thoughts and words were original with him, and in that case to say that he selected the words, is merely to say that he selected the thoughts, since he could not be conscious of the thoughts apart from the words. If then—as in respect to our capacity of *thought* being limited to the finite, the conditioned, the relative—our own consciousness is the proper test; then the cherished notion of some of the most orthodox and most excellent of men, that the sacred writers selected the words whereby to express the thoughts of the Divine mind, is erroneous and delusive.

The question whether the Holy Scriptures are the words of God, as being in the original texts His utterances of His own thoughts, communicated by Him to those whom He appointed to write them, and therefore His words in the same sense that the written words of men are theirs, is a question of fact to be decided by evidence. It is not self-evident. It is not a mere matter of faith, independently of evidences intelligible to the understanding, and of convictions resulting from study or from the inward illumination of the Spirit. Hence their Divine Author not only asserts, ever and

anon, that the words are His, but He exhibits a variety of evidences and demonstrations addressed to the reason and conscience of man, that they are indeed His. The controversy, verbal and actual, between Jehovah and the worshipers of idols, false prophets, Satan, hypocrites, and unbelievers, turns upon the question whether or not the words of Scripture are His words? That controversy manifests the antagonism between good and evil—between *Infinite* good and *finite* evil. The words employed in Scripture respecting it, imply, on the part of their author, a perfect knowledge of infinite goodness, and of finite evil, and of their relations, and how they can coëxist. Of such knowledge, man is, by his limited faculties, utterly incapable; and he is therefore utterly incompetent to be the author of the words of Scripture respecting it. The use of those words therefore proves that they are the words of God.

Were we called on to *believe* nothing which we can not conceive of as being finite, then the universe, visible and invisible, should be as conceivable as any of its several parts. There should be no distinction in reality, or as an object of conception, or as an object of reasoning, between the infinite and the finite; and our consciousness should be no evidence either as to what we conceive, or as to what we believe. We should be reduced to the necessity of concluding that there was no universe out of our own minds. The philosophy and dogmatism which have this issue, are sufficiently notorious.

Were we called on to *believe* respecting things finite only what we perfectly comprehend, and what our reason dictates, we could have no fixed and settled



faith whatever. For what single thing, external or internal, do we *perfectly* comprehend? The rationalism and infidelity which lead to this issue, are abundantly common.

But while the heathen are left to these alternatives, and show by their systems of theory and practice, the absolute necessity of revelation, the Scriptures, as the words of the Omniscient Creator, require us to receive them as His testimony, and to believe them solely on His authority. They require this with respect to one portion of their contents, as much, and on the same ground, as with respect to any other portion; as much with respect to what is historical as with respect to what is doctrinal, preceptive, and prophetic; as much with respect to things finite as with respect to things infinite. Man is no more constituted to be his own original instructor in any of these things as they relate to his spiritual, moral, and accountable being, than he is constituted to be his own moral governor, his own saviour, and his own final judge. The Creator Himself, therefore, who gave man his constitution, gave His own authoritative and infallible words in the Holy Scriptures, for the instruction and direction of the finite, dependent, fallible creature.













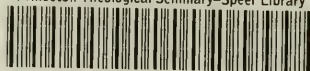




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